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1009 Turnberry Place · Landfall

Overlooking the ICW with distant views of the Atlantic Ocean and Wrightsville Beach, this island inspired design by renowned local architect, Henry Johnston, features an open contemporary floor plan with floor-to-ceiling glass and includes 5 bedrooms and 4 ½ baths. **$1,995,000**

2328 Ocean Point Place · Landfall Club

Tucked amidst moss-draped live oaks and palm trees, this contemporary Landfall residence is located on a high bluff and overlooks the intracoastal waterway, offering some of our areas best views: the rolling surf of Mason's Inlet between Wrightsville Beach and Figure Eight Island. **$1,775,000,000**

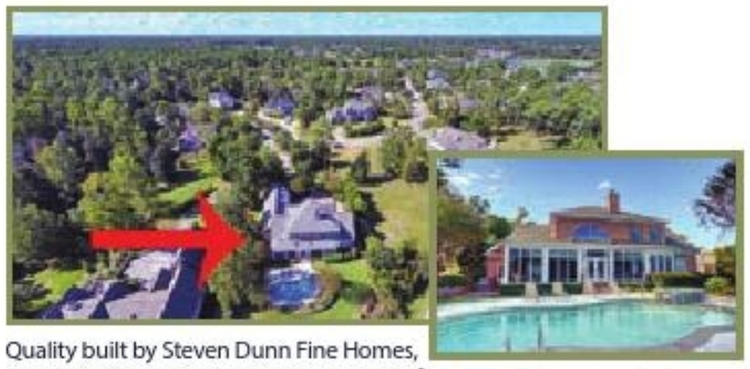
222 Carolina Beach Avenue · Cabana De Mar

Enjoy this 3rd floor oceanfront condo that has been updated with tile floors and granite counters throughout. A short stroll to the boardwalk and marina provide different venues to enjoy all that Carolina Beach has to offer. **$185,000**

1 West Greensboro Street · Wrightsville Beach

Beautiful 6 bedroom, 6 bath Wright Holman built condo on Wrightsville Beach. Units A&B can be sold together for $1,300,000 or separately for $659,000 each. Don't miss out on this opportunity to own a great condo on the beach! **$1,300,000**

2220 Moreland Drive · Landfall



Quality built by Steven Dunn Fine Homes, this all brick residence is located at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac overlooking scenic Landfall Lake and the mile long walking trail with views of the ICW and Wrightsville Beach. The open floor plan and 10 ft. ceilings provide a spacious feel and views of the fenced yard and pool from nearly every room. **$1,199,000**

2020 Pelican Reach · Landfall

One of Landfall's largest lots (2.26 acres!) overlooking the Nicklaus 9th hole and Landfall Clubhouse. This home site is located at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac and features long water and golf views. **$750,000**

8747 Ramsbury Way · Plantation Landing

Conveniently located near Porters Neck Rd. and Futch Creek with easy access to the I-140 bybass, this brick villa features 3 bedrooms and 2 baths on the 1st floor with an additional room and bath upstairs. Elegant moldings, hardwood floors, tile baths and granite/stainless kitchen. **$319,500**

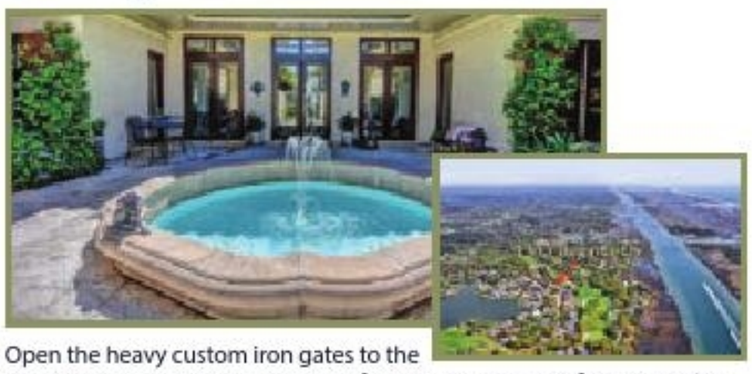
2285 Allens Lane · Wrightsville Beach

Locals know that the drawbridge to Wrightsville Beach is the bulls eye for real estate values and quality of life. This like-new brick home offers easy access to the drawbridge, the "Loop", marinas and many water front dining options. **$1,495,000**

2029 Balmoral Drive · Landfall

Sited on a gently sloping, wooded bluff overlooking Landfall's Howe Creek (with tidal creek access for the nature lover), this all-brick, quality built home by Blanton Building features an open floor plan with 10 ft. ceilings and generous rooms. **$1,295,000**

1333 Regatta Drive · Landfall



Open the heavy custom iron gates to the courtyard with cast stone pool and fountain and you will feel like you've entered a Tuscan treasure. The ingenious iron split garage design provides the perfect private entry with flanking gardens, travertine stone pavers and terra cotta barrel tile roof. **$995,000**

1345 Regatta Drive · Landfall

Just perfect! Not too big. Not too small. This well designed, well maintained Landfall home overlooks two holes of the Pete Dye golf course (#8 & #9) and has a peek-a-boo view of the intracoastal waterway. **$624,000**

1947 Prestwick · Landfall

Tucked away on a secluded tree lined lane near Landfall's Eastwood Road Gate, this 3 bedroom, 2 bath Prestwick patio home overlooks a tranquil pond and offers maximum privacy. From the low maintenance tabby/coquina shell exterior to the all-on-one-floor design, this home has been lovingly updated with a new kitchen and master bath. **$419,000**

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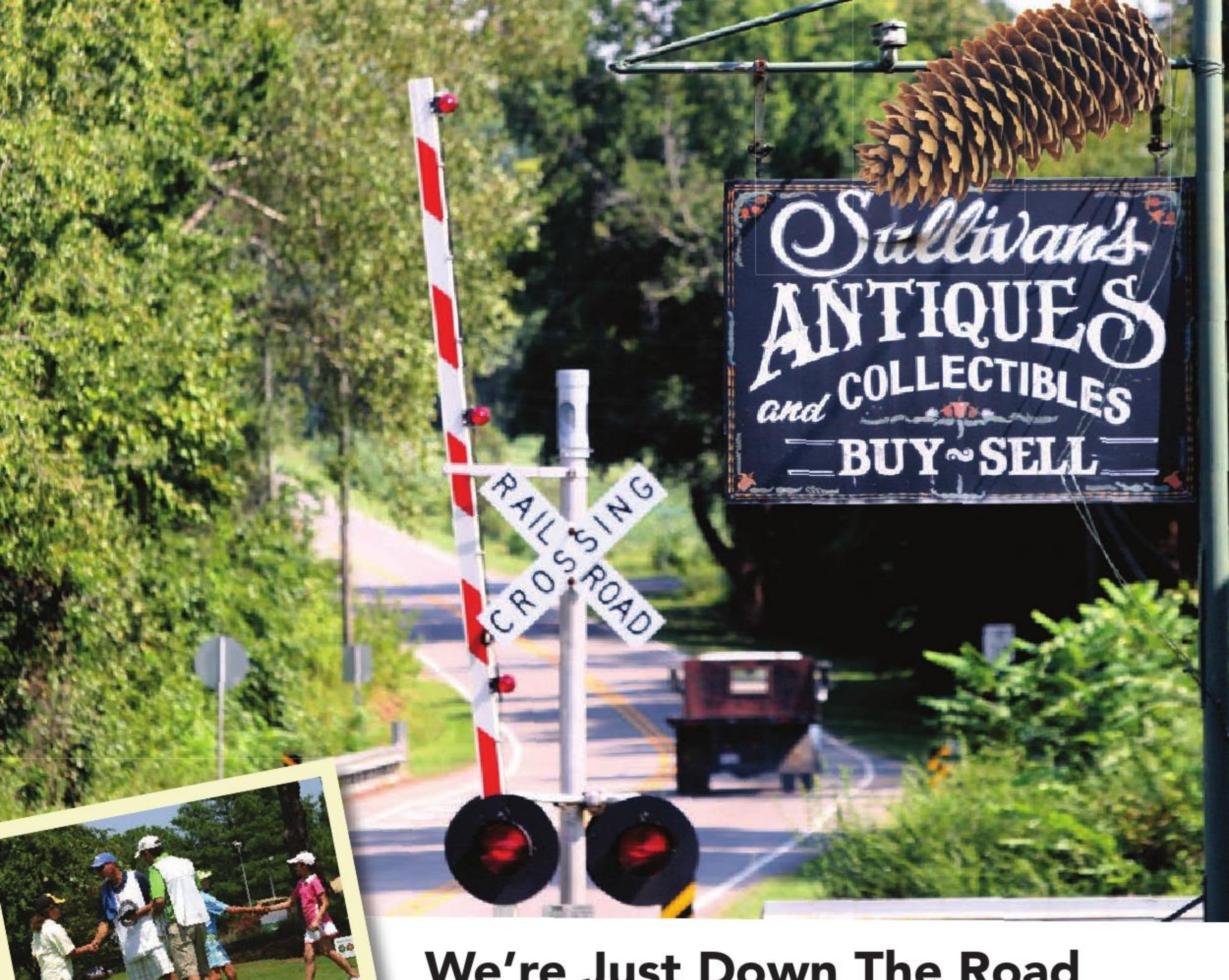

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1542 Magnolia Place — *Magnolia Place/Oleander*

This home sits at the end of an oak lined quiet cul-de-sac with side yard overlooking the tenth fairway of Cape Fear Country Club's golf course. This three bedroom, three bath home offers all formal areas plus sunroom, a cozy den and breakfast room, and a separate children's suite upstairs with bedroom, full bath and huge playroom. It is within walking distance of Cape Fear Country Club and is close to New Hanover Regional Medical Center, downtown, and shopping and dining. **$349,900**

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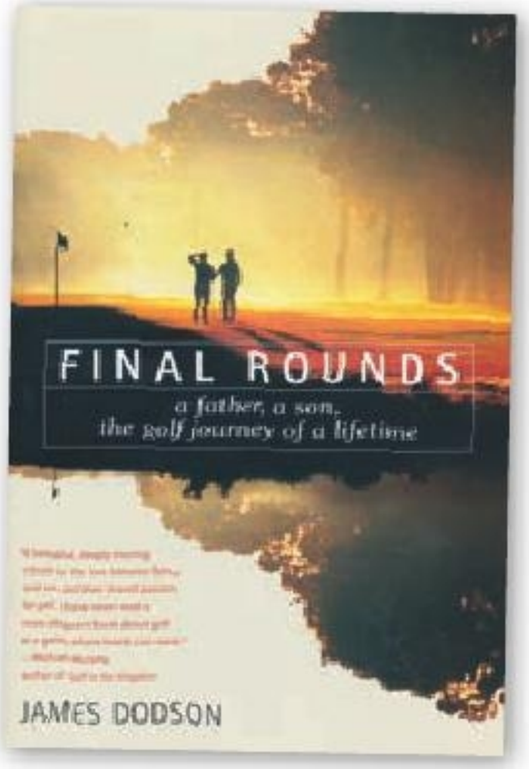
The Spirit of Opti

By Jim Dodson

Twenty years ago this month, I took my father on a long-dreamed-of golf trip back to England and Scotland, where he learned the game as a soldier prior to D-Day during the Second World War.



Being a veteran golf writer who'd chased the game extensively through England and Scotland, I set up what I believed to be a modest and meaningful itinerary appropriate to my dad's physical infirmities, a roaming journey highlighted by visits to Lytham & St Annes Golf Club on the Lancashire Coast — where he was stationed during the war — with a finale at St Andrews, the Home of Golf.

What I didn't know at the moment we embarked was the full extent to which my dad's cancer had returned after many years lying dormant, though I might have guessed as much by my mother's comments as she saw us off at the airport in Greensboro.

While my dad was charming the wings off a pretty airline employee, my mother gently took my elbow and calmly whispered: "Just so you know, darling, I'm completely opposed to you two going on this trip. The thought of your father walking those difficult courses in the rain and wind and cold, the two of you drinking beer and driving those narrow lanes gives me nightmares."

I patted her arm. "Everything will be just fine, Mom. Trust me. I'll look after him. Besides, the beer is warm."

"Funny boy."

She managed a Steel Magnolia smile. But the look in her large blue eyes said she wasn't even slightly amused.

"I'll look after him," I promised

She patted my arm. "You'd better, sweetie. If you don't bring him back to me, you'll need to seek asylum in Scotland."

For his part, you wouldn't have detected anything amiss with my old man. He was visibly in high spirits and up to his old tricks with a charmed stranger, though as I learned just days later, his doctor had given him half a dozen weeks to live.

My nickname for my father, dating nearly from our earliest days together on a golf course, when I was a hot-headed, club-throwing kid of 13, was Opti the Mystic. He was an adman with a poet's heart, the most upbeat character and naturally optimistic human being I've ever known.

As it turns out, we needed his famous optimism because just about everything that could go wrong did so almost from the moment we touched down in London in the midst of a driving rain storm.

A scheduled round at Sunningdale Old — where Bobby Jones shot his perfect score — got washed away. Gale-force winds followed us all the way to the Lancashire coast, where I managed to book us into a historic Southport hotel that appeared to be holding a convention for narcoleptic seniors. The lobby was filled with napping gray-hairs as we stumbled in numb and dripping from an aborted round at nearby Royal Birkdale, where Arnold Palmer captured his first Open Championship in 1960. We managed to get four holes in, pulling trollies, before the Lancashire skies opened up with a vengeance.

Instead, after cleaning up and having supper in the empty formal dining room, with fresh pints in hand we had a pitch and putt match through the corridors of the famous Prince of Wales, doing only minor damage to the fading wallpaper and Queen Anne furniture.

During the match, Opti told me a lovely story I'd never heard about his parents, my rural grandparents, who drove their elderly Hudson to New York City to meet him off the troop ship from England in 1945, their first trip ever out of North Carolina. My mother, then working for an admiral in Annapolis, took a train to join them for the big reunion. They all put up in a hotel somewhere around Times Square.

After a day of sightseeing, my dad found my grandfather — a devoted fisherman — on the darkened terrace garden of the hotel smoking a King Edward cigar and practicing his casting with a new rod and reel my father purchased for him at a famous sporting goods shop on Fifth Avenue.

"He was a proud but quiet man, as you may recall. He never said much. That was the Indian blood in him," Dad explained, reminding me that my grandfather's mother, the family story went, was an orphaned Cherokee infant when George Washington Tate — for whom Greensboro's Tate Street is named — found her during one of his Western circuits to preach the Gospel at one of the frontier Methodist churches he established. He named her Emma and raised her with four strapping sons on a farm near Mebane. She grew up to marry a ne'er-do-well horse farmer and fiddle player named Jimmy Dodson who kept a large farm off Buckhorn Road near the junction of Dodson's Crossroads outside Carrboro. This was the farm where my father spent his happiest summers as a boy, tagging along through the field where Aunt Emma, the local natural healer, gathered herbs and wildflowers for her famous medicines.

"He suggested we have a little casting competition like the one you and I are having with golf clubs — right there on the terrace of the hotel."

"Who won?"

"Don't recall. I'm sure it was him."

Naturally, my old man won the chip and putt match at the Prince of Wales that evening. His seasoned British-made short game was a thing of beauty, even at age 80.

As we headed for bed, another memory surfaced, another story I'd never heard.

"True story. When your grandfather was dying he asked me to give him a proper shave. He said he didn't want to meet his maker looking so poorly."

"Did you?"

"Of course. He passed away the next day. That's how we Dodsons seem to go, you know — clean shaven and without a lot of fuss and bother. Maybe that's the Indian in us."

At Lytham the next day, where Jones captured the Open Championship in 1923, a retired club secretary named Tony Nixon greeted us warmly and sent us out to play a delightful round in good English sunshine with my dad spinning one great tale after another.

Afterward, we retreated to a nearby tavern where a drunken Irishman unexpectedly exhumed my father's most haunting memory from that time: a tragic plane crash on the air base where he was scheduled to fly a glider into Normandy but in the meantime wrote the base newsletter and was in charge of parachute packing.

The crash of an Allied bomber making an emergency landing after repairs took the lives of forty-one villagers, including twenty-six 5 and 6-year-olds at the

village church's annex. Fearing the effect on public morale, news of the tragedy never made the newspapers. But Bing Crosby was flown in to sing to the grieving families of Freckleton. My father, it turned out, was one of the first to arrive on the terrible scene, pulling victims out of the inferno. His burned hands sent him to the base infirmary — and knocked him out of the flight rotation. Given the high mortality rate of glider pilots in the subsequent invasion to liberate occupied France, the tragedy may be the reason I'm here today.

"Life promises us sorrow," Opti told me as we moseyed on up to Scotland, the last leg of our travels. "It's up to us to add the joy."

The heavy rains followed us to Scotland, where the weather miraculously cleared long enough for us to play Turnberry and Gleneagles on glorious afternoons. We told tales and drank good warm beer the entire way, moving on to Gullane, where we played Muirfield with an old friend named Archie Baird and his little dog, Niblick.

We finished up at St Andrews, missing our chance to play through the newly created daily lottery system but walking the Old Course at sunset, playing a round of air golf in the beautiful final rays of light falling over the cold North Sea and Eden Estuary.

To no one's surprise, Opti lived and worked longer than anyone expected him to — five more months, in fact.

In late January, not long after his 80th birthday, he thanked his six employees, closed up his office behind Irving Park Plaza, and went home to die.

I showed up a day or so later. With the help of a fantastic hospice worker named Bradley, I learned how to be my dad's personal caretaker, performing tasks I never fathomed I would be capable of doing during those emotionally draining weeks that followed. As his days and nights inverted, we sat together having more conversations until one evening he asked me to give him a proper shave.

"What's that sound?" he asked as I carefully did my duty.

I told him it was the sound of sleet falling outside. It was the first day of March.

He smiled a little and told me not to worry, that skies would be sunny in the morning. He also said I should kiss my wife and take my two small children fishing. I assured him I would do so on both counts. Then he asked me to help him down the hallway to his wife's bed. I closed the door behind me as I left, listening to my parents talk like shy newlyweds.

Opti quietly slipped the bonds of this Earth early two mornings later, going the way Dodsons always seem to go — clean shaven and without much fuss or bother.

It was a beautiful March morning.

The little book I wrote about our last golf trip together, *Final Rounds*, was published the following November. It went on to become a surprise best-seller published in seven languages, selling more than half a million copies.

After reading it, among other nice surprises, Arnold Palmer asked me to help him write his long-awaited memoirs. The estate of Ben Hogan followed. The thousands of letters I've received from fathers and sons and mothers and daughters since that time mean more than anything else.

The spirit of Opti lives on. And the book is still in print, about to celebrate its 20th anniversary in late 2016. The letters still come. I answer every one of them.

When Hospice and Palliative Care of Greensboro invited me to give the keynote speech opening their beautiful new facility in 1999, I was honored to do so, to explain how hospice care provided me with a life-affirming experience I wouldn't trade for anything.

For many years afterward, I was pleased to learn, hospice organizations around the country gave out copies of *Final Rounds*. Funny how so much life comes from death. Life promises us sorrow, you might say; it's up to us to add the joy.

Later this month, I get to do it again — serving as the emcee at Hospice and Palliative Care of the Sandhills.

Somewhere, I'll wager with a good healing pint of warm English beer, Opti the Mystic will be watching and smiling.

Contact editor Jim Dodson at jim@saltmagazinenc.com.

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SaltWorks

Legend Has It

American tennis superstar James Blake will headline the 2015 "Legends of Tennis" charity exhibition at Landfall's Drysdale Sports Center complex on Friday, September 18, and Saturday, September 19. Renowned for his "rocket-speed" forehand – one shot clocked at 125 miles per hour during the 2011 U.S. Open – former tennis pro and American No. 1 James Blake amassed twenty-four singles finals appearances during his career and once held the World No. 4 singles ranking. He played in the 2006 Tennis Masters Cup finals in Shanghai, the semifinals at the Beijing Olympics, the quarterfinals of the 2008 Australian Open, and the 2005 and 2006 U.S. Opens. Now, he'll bring his signature forehand to Wilmington for an exhibit that supports the Landfall Foundation and the UNCW Seahawk Club. Joining Blake: Rennae Stubbs, winner of four Grand Slam doubles titles and over sixty WTA doubles tour titles; Jimmy Arias, once ranked as high as No. 5 in the world; Bobby Reynolds, who finished No. 1 in national singles rankings in 2003; and Mikael Pernfors of Sweden, who played in the French Open and Davis Cup finals. Legends play includes singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Proceeds assist in awarding grants to local nonprofits. Info: landfalllegends.com.

Make a Splash

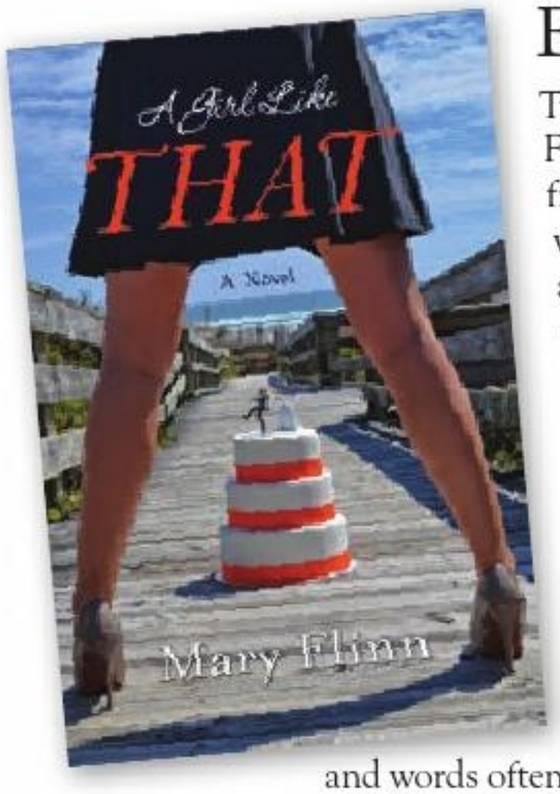
Think the dog days are over? Think again. Tuesday, Septembe 8, through Sunday, September 13, Legion Pool will be closed to the bipedal public and open for the annual Pooch Plunge – what old Buster was likely dreaming about last time you hearc that familiar sleep whimper. For water-loving pups who have never been, it's the canine equivalent to doggy Heaven. Just as Buster. Tuesday through Thursday from 4–8 p.m.; Saturday from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.; Sunday from 12–4 p.m. Cost: $5/dog. Legion Pool, 2131 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3682.

Kiss the Kooks

The days are getting shorter, and candy corn is propagating like some kind of (debatably) edible kudzu. With the season newly ripe for a little dark humor, Thalian Association presents the Wilmington premier of *The Addams Family*, an original story featuring the creepy, kooky family that we all know and love. Wednesday Addams, pigtailed princess of darkness, is all grown up and head-over-heels in love. When she confides in her father, Gomez Addams must do something he's never done – keep a secret from his beloved wife, Morticia. Want to guess what happens when their family hosts dinner for Wednesday's "normal" boyfriend and his perfectly respectable parents? Runs Thursday, September 24, through Saturday, September 26, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, September 27, at 3 p.m.; also runs Thursday, October 1, through Saturday, October 3, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, October 4, at 7:30 p.m. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: www.thalianhall.org.

Good Bones

The fifteenth annual "Race for Preservation" – 5K run and 1-mile walk through downtown Wilmington – is scheduled to take place on Thursday, September 10, at 6:30 p.m. Open to teams and individuals of all ages and fitness levels; includes post-race awards and afterparty. Proceeds support Historic Wilmington Foundation's mission to protect and preserve the irreplaceable architectural and historical resources in Wilmington and the Lower Cape Fear region. Registration: $27 (individual); $22 (team member). Coastline Convention Center, 503 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.



Elle is for Love

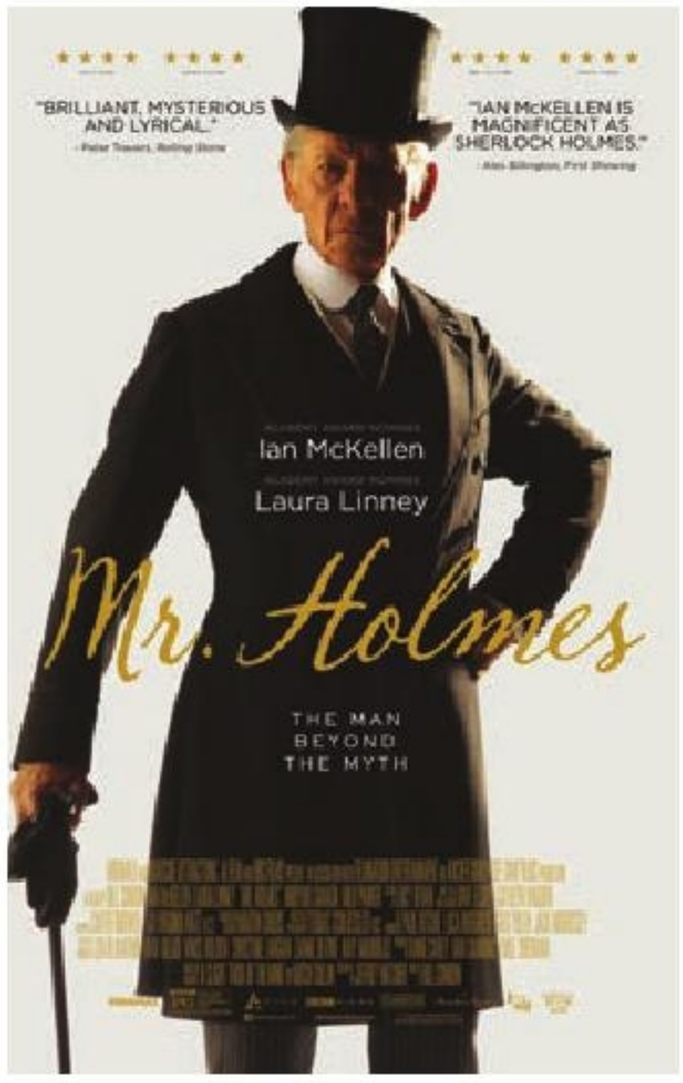
Tuesday, September 29, at 6:30 p.m., Mary Flinn, of Summerfield, will read excerpts from her seventh novel, *A Girl Like That*, whose main character may or may not be the author's alter ego. Told from the perspective of "bad girl" Elle McLarin, whom Flinn fans will recall meeting in her first novel, *The One*, this is a tale of starting over. After serving time in prison, Elle moves to Wilmington to open a bakery with the hope of reinventing herself in a town where no one knows her name or seedy past. "The book is driven by her internal, conflicting dialogue," says Flinn. And while the author admits that Elle's actions and words often surprised her during the writing process, "I could probably learn from emulating some of it," she says. Hopefully Flinn will share the story of the book's cover image, shot at Wrightsville Beach Access No. 4. Free. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6323 or www.nhclibrary.org.

The Hot Ticket

So much as utter the following three words in the company of old-time or folk music devotees and expect a reaction that contains, in no particular order, a gasp, jig and squeal: Carolina Chocolate Drops. On Monday, September 28, Rhiannon Giddens, lead singer, violinist, banjo player and founding member of the Grammy-winning Carolina Chocolate Drops, will perform at Brooklyn Arts Center. Paddle fast. Those who have heard Giddens and her banjo sing know this is going to be a sell-out. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets: $30. BAC, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

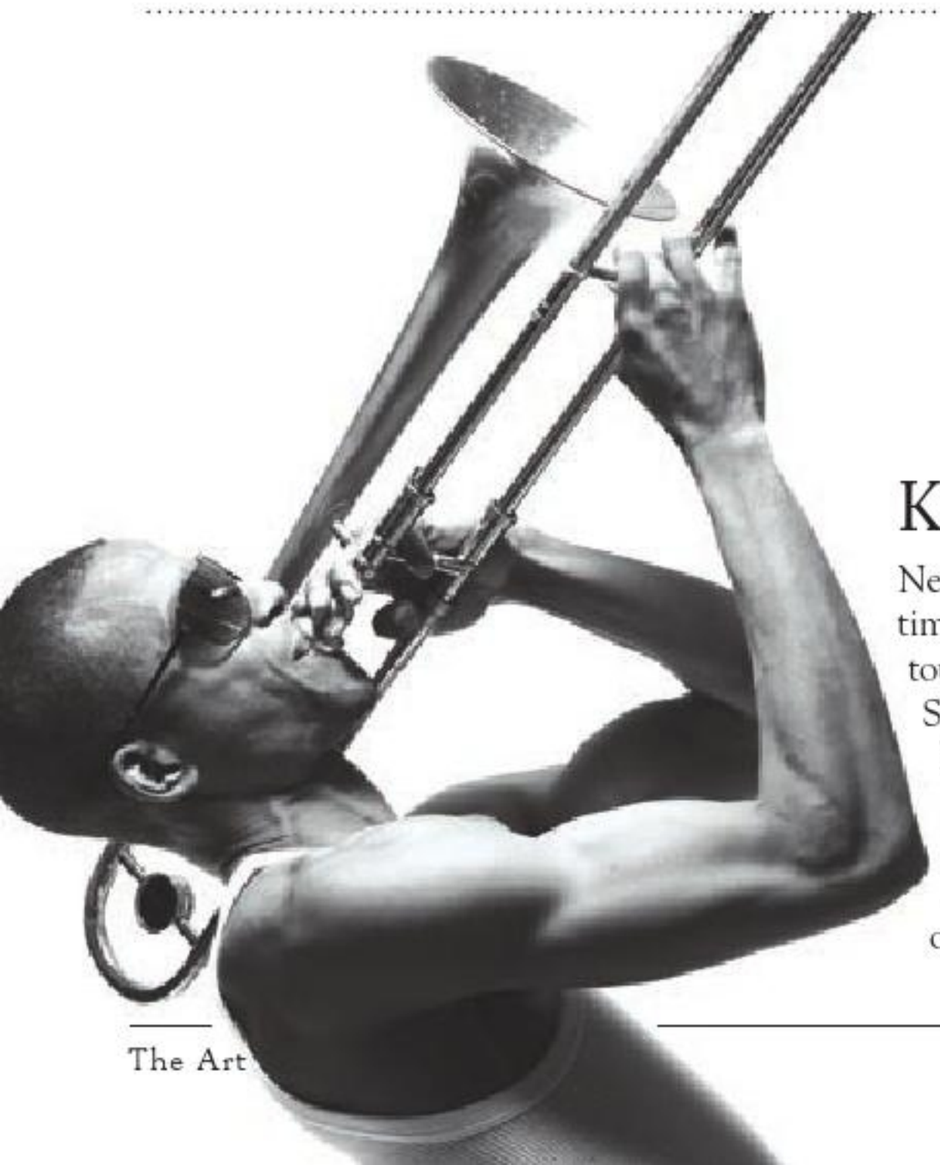
Tour de Fork

On Saturday, September 26, from 6:30–10 p.m., savor and celebrate the three tasty regions of our state at the second annual "Flavors of North Carolina" event, what your taste buds might call a figurative road trip. Fare and music from the mountains to the shore plus a "small plate" tasting of regional food and local beer and wine? You had us at taters and maters. Tickets: $75. Proceeds benefit the Good Shepherd Center. St. James Parish, 25 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-4424 or goodshepherdwilmington.org.



Watson Aside

If you think Ian McKellen is a wizard on the big screen, wait until you see him in director Bill Condon's latest. Monday, September 7 (Labor Day), through Wednesday, September 9, Cinematique of Wilmington presents *Mr. Holmes* (2015), a tender twist on the world's most famous detective. Set in 1947, an aging Sherlock Holmes (McKellen) returns from a journey to Japan, where, in search of a rare plant with powerful restorative qualities, he has witnessed the devastation of nuclear warfare. Grappling with the diminishing powers of his mind, Mr. Holmes revisits the circumstances of the unsolved case that forced him into retirement. It's a "man beyond the myth" tale with a cast that dazzles. All logical reasoning says go. Tickets: $7. Show times: 7 p.m. (Monday & Tuesday); 4 and 7 p.m. (Wednesday). Thalian Hall Main Stage, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: www.thalianhall.org.



Kick in the Brass

New Orleans native Trombone Shorty, who toured internationally for the first time at age 12, joined Lenny Kravitz's horn section at age 19 for a 105-date world tour in 2005 and 2006. Now, he's bandleader and frontman of Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, a hard-edged funk band with rock dynamics, hip-hop beats and that sweet, free-form jazz improvisation that transports everyone listening to whatever faraway place the music invokes. Experience the magic on Saturday, September 12, 7 p.m. Tickets: $27–32. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

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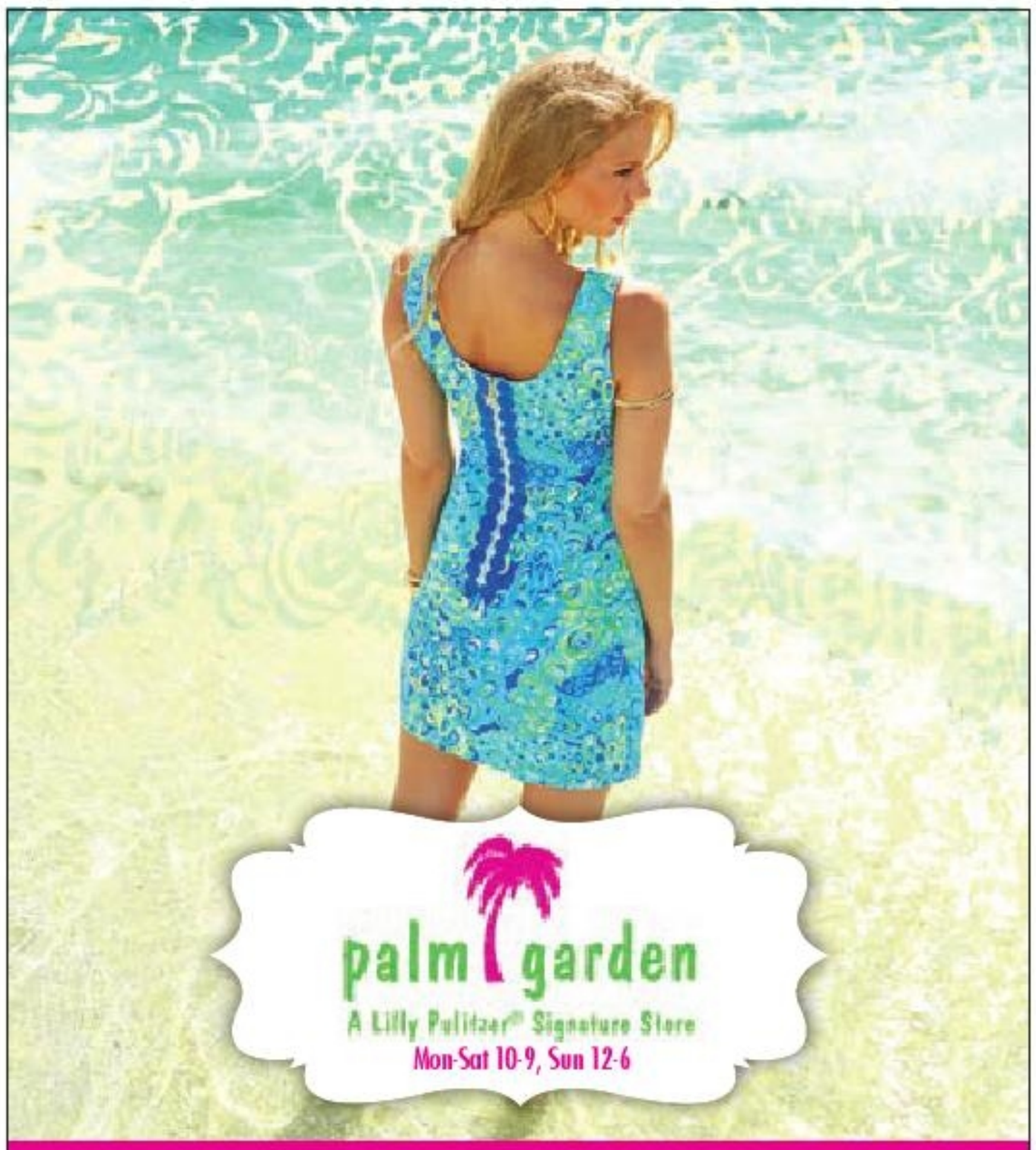
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Gatsby Girl

Old clothes that make new memories

By Ashley Wahl

Home isn't always tangible. Often it exists purely in memory, invoked by the scent of garden lilies, a cedar closet — crumb cake that tastes as it did in childhood.

Home is the space where we feel most whole: a loving embrace or the shade of a favorite oak; a gentle return to equilibrium.

For 35-year-old Jess James, home is the stories and sentiment that a cherished garment can evoke.

"My love of vintage clothing stems from my nana," says Jess, the stylish blonde in the corner booth at Le Catalan, the riverfront café she calls one of her favorite restaurants in town.

And so begins her story.

**

"Nana saved everything," says Jess of her unflappable Pennsylvania grandma, who wore pearls every Sunday and had a wardrobe that spanned seven closets.

"Her silhouette was always very classic, very Audrey Hepburn," says Jess, who is more of the Clara Bow vein.

But if Nana cherished one garment above all others, it was the mink stole her husband bought her in the 1950s.

As Jess reels into a tale about Kenneth Seaboldt, her enigmatic grandpa who died in a car accident when her mother was still in high school — "He was an insurance man who, for some reason, didn't have insurance" — her playful blue eyes shine.

"He used to travel all over the country and Europe and would always return with something beautiful to give my nana."

He paid $1,500 for the stole. Nana saved the receipt.

"It was probably the most valuable thing that she owned," says Jess.

Although he didn't have insurance per se, grandpa Kenneth had amassed a sizable collection of rare stamps and coins, antiquarian books, period pieces and antiques. If anything were to happen to him, he told Nana, she could sell the stock. She and the kids would be fine.

Or not.

As it turned out, a couple of Philly mobsters broke into his home office during the funeral and took everything of value. They even swiped the fur shawl from one of Nana's closets.

"She was crushed," says Jess. "But the saving grace was when she realized that the thieves had stolen her fake mink. She'd worn the real one to the funeral."

When Nana died, Jess wore one of her grandmother's knit black suits to the funeral.

"It fit like it was made for me," says Jess, who wore the mink, too.

And now it's part of her wardrobe — part of her family narrative.

Wearing it feels like home.

**

Sometimes the right dress can take Jess back decades — back to the 1920s with a blonde flapper bob wig. Or to a Jazz Age lawn party.

"People tell me that I must have been a flapper in a past life," she says. "I've always gravitated to the romance and glamour of the 1920s. It's a big part of who I am, what I do and what I love. There's something unexplainable about it."

Many people associate Jess with the Gatsby-themed galas she has hosted in Wilmington over the past several years, but given the opportunity to wear one of her beaded tunics or flashy headpieces, she's known to travel, too. Last year, it was off to New York City for the Jazz Age Lawn Party held on Governors Island in June and August (she went to both). And last September, she and her husband, Joel, spent their anniversary in Richmond for the Art Deco Society of Virginia's Gatsby Afternoon Picnic.

"I had just put my flapper wig on," says Jess, recalling their arrival and the familiar rush of excitement she experiences each time she channels her inner Daisy. The lush lawns of Richmond's historic Wilton House were dotted with wicker baskets and vintage linens; gents in boaters sipped juleps alongside ladies with lace parasols.

"When we walked through the entrance gate, Joel looked at me and said, 'We found your people.'"

While she admits that being in the company of fellow Gatsby enthusiasts feels like something of a homecoming, get her talking about her Market Street showroom, Style Girl Vintage, and you'll discover that her affinity with vintage clothing is much deeper than a love of playing dress-up.

**

Recently, a client brought her deceased mother's vintage clothing to Jess's showroom for consignment.

"She was getting emotional right before she left," says Jess. "I told her I'd find good homes for her mother's things."

Weeks later, Jess impulsively tried on an outfit from the lot — a cream suit with matching jacket.

"I couldn't believe the way it fit me," says Jess. "Just like my nana's."

And so she snapped a photo and sent it to her client.

"I can't tell you how much this means to me," the client replied. "Today is the anniversary of my mom's death. I feel like she used you to send me a message."

Backlit by the afternoon sun, Jess shimmers as if ornamented with sequins.

"People who appreciate old clothes often have some sentimental connection to them. I just love that so much."

Jess James will host a Gatsby Lawn Party at Paula Corbett's Spring Garden Drive home on Saturday, October 17, from 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. Rain date: Sunday, October 18. For tickets and more information, visit www.stylegirljessjames.com.

Our spy, senior editor Ashley Wahl, is prone to wander.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LISA BROWN OF BELLA ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY

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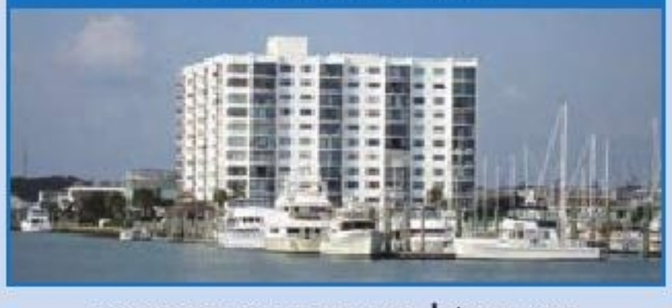

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Making it Real

For veteran film and TV set designer Matt Sullivan, the art of his craft is creating the right environment

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

By Gwenyfar Rohler

"More than being a set decorator, I feel like I am an environmental artist."

Matt Sullivan pauses, clarifies: "That sounds kind of coy, but what I'm trying to do is create environments that are absolutely real so that when the director and the actors are working in that space, they can immerse themselves in the script. If I can provide that as my part of the collaboration, then I feel like I'm doing my job."

A set director is responsible for everything on a film or television set short of building the actual set. So all the flooring, carpeting, tile, furniture, art, light fixtures, appliances, draperies, etc. are the domain of the set decorator. That's quite an undertaking: from building Revolutionary War battlefields and 1940s hospital rooms, to oil stations in the desert and the famed "Archives" of *Sleepy Hollow*, Sullivan has created worlds within worlds for almost thirty years.

Oddly enough, it began with seeing *Jaws* in a movie theater.

"I went to see it pretty much once a week that entire summer. I loved every aspect of the film. Then two years later *Star Wars* came out, and that just sealed my fate."

Sullivan shakes his head and chuckles. "I just couldn't believe how cool you could make things and how much emotion you could feel by watching something filmed."

That signature Sullivan grin lights up not just his ruddy face and golden red-dish hair, but his whole being. Once you see it for the first time, every moment you are around him you want to make him smile and laugh.

As any boy purusing a dream kindled by a shark would, Sullivan majored in film while attending Penn State; then he looked around for the next step to life with Spielberg. "At the time, the Wilmington film industry was just getting started with Dino De Laurentiis. I felt like it might be a little easier to break into the business in North Carolina rather than New York or Los Angeles." He landed on a DeLaurentiis film written and directed by Christopher Coppola (Nick Cage's brother and Francis Ford's nephew), titled *Dracula's Widow*.

"It was a terrible little horror movie, directed by one of Francis Ford Coppla's nephews . . . It was not a very good movie. In fact, it's awful," Sullivan concedes. "But it was fun to get a start on." At the memory he flashes the smile again. "It was such a low-budget movie there was a real collaborative sense to it." Then grins again and translates: "We were understaffed."

For a kid with big dreams fresh out of college, it was exactly what he was looking for. In theory he had been hired to work in the locations department, but in reality he got to do everything. "So I was helping out the props guys, doing some special effects, doing some puppeteering . . ." the grin is at full wattage and his eyes are out of focus at the memory.

From that auspicious beginning he moved onward and upward, working for several years as an on-set dresser. A set decorator for a film or TV show might have two sets filming on the same day or one filming, and the decorator is already working on the next two to shoot for the film. In that case, the on-set dresser becomes the decorator's eyes and ears during filming.

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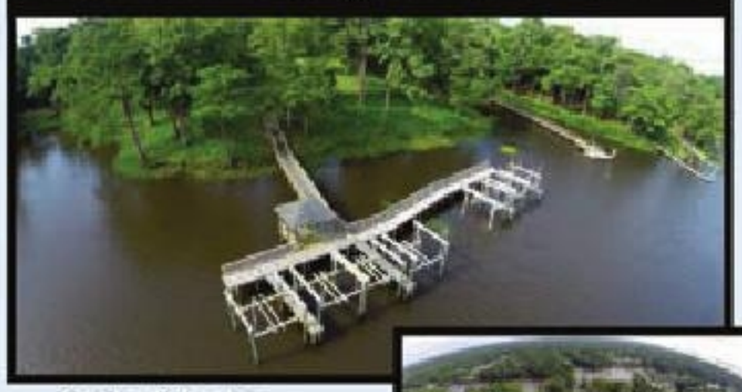

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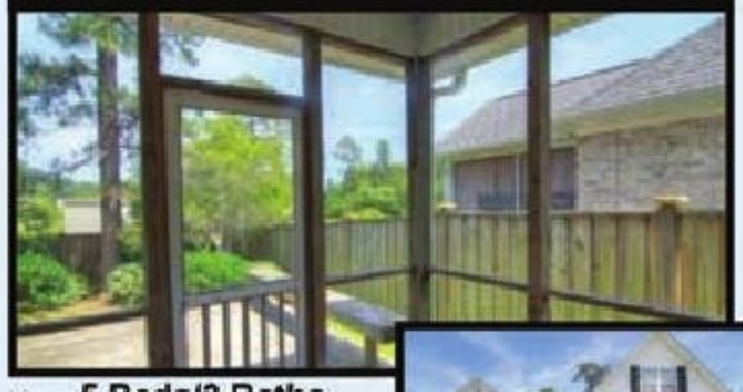

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"When the camera has to come in and the entire right side of the room has to be cleared out to accommodate the camera and track and gear, then when they turn around and they're going to see that area, the on-set dresser is going to put it back the way it was intended to be seen," Sullivan explains. It was during *American Gothic*, a Sam Raimi-produced TV show filmed here in the early '90s, that Sullivan's battlefield promotion to set decorator came. "I was working with a gentleman who was a huge influence in my movie life, a guy named Hugh Scaife, who came to Wilmington during the Dino years early on and was a very well-established decorator himself," Sullivan recalls. "I mean an unbelievably talented guy who had done a number of the Bond films and worked with David Lean."

We look at each other with a shared moment of awe: *Lawrence of Arabia*, *The Bridge on the River Kwai* and *Dr. Zhivago* flash quickly through my mind. To film buffs, that's like saying you stretched canvasses for Monet, Renoir and Cézanne. "He was the kindest, nicest man who really wanted to help the next generation learn how to do movies. What to deem important and what to not focus on."

Sullivan stops, takes a breath and then: "He was my mentor."

On *American Gothic*, Sullivan was supposed to be Scaife's assistant, but unexpectedly, he became the set decorator, with Scaife as his advisor. Then, as Sullivan points out, followed a period that was constantly busy here with film production, and "I got a couple of opportunities to be the decorator and I did a good enough job that I kept getting hired."

Twenty years later, he's just wrapped up two seasons on *Sleepy Hollow*. For a set decorator, it is a show that has had some perks with the high concept supernatural nature of the production. One of the main sets for the show is the Archives. "It's a reading room the main characters spend the majority of their time researching and figuring out what their plan of action is going to be." It has been in *Sleepy Hollow* for centuries and is now a repository for the history and myth that drives the show. "Our production designer on the first season, Alec Hammond, designed a beautiful space that was just a great backdrop for me to come in and dress and give layer upon layer upon layer of history to, and depth."

Because the set has been used constantly, not only has the audience really had a chance to see all the intricate details that Sullivan and his crew painstakingly pieced together, but the cast and crew have spent a lot of time there, too. "Pretty much anybody that walks in there says they want to stay in there or have a party in there or live there." Sullivan nods in affirmation then grins his grin. "That's a nice compliment when people say they want to live on your set."

Gwenyfar Rohler spends her days managing her family's bookstore on Front Street.

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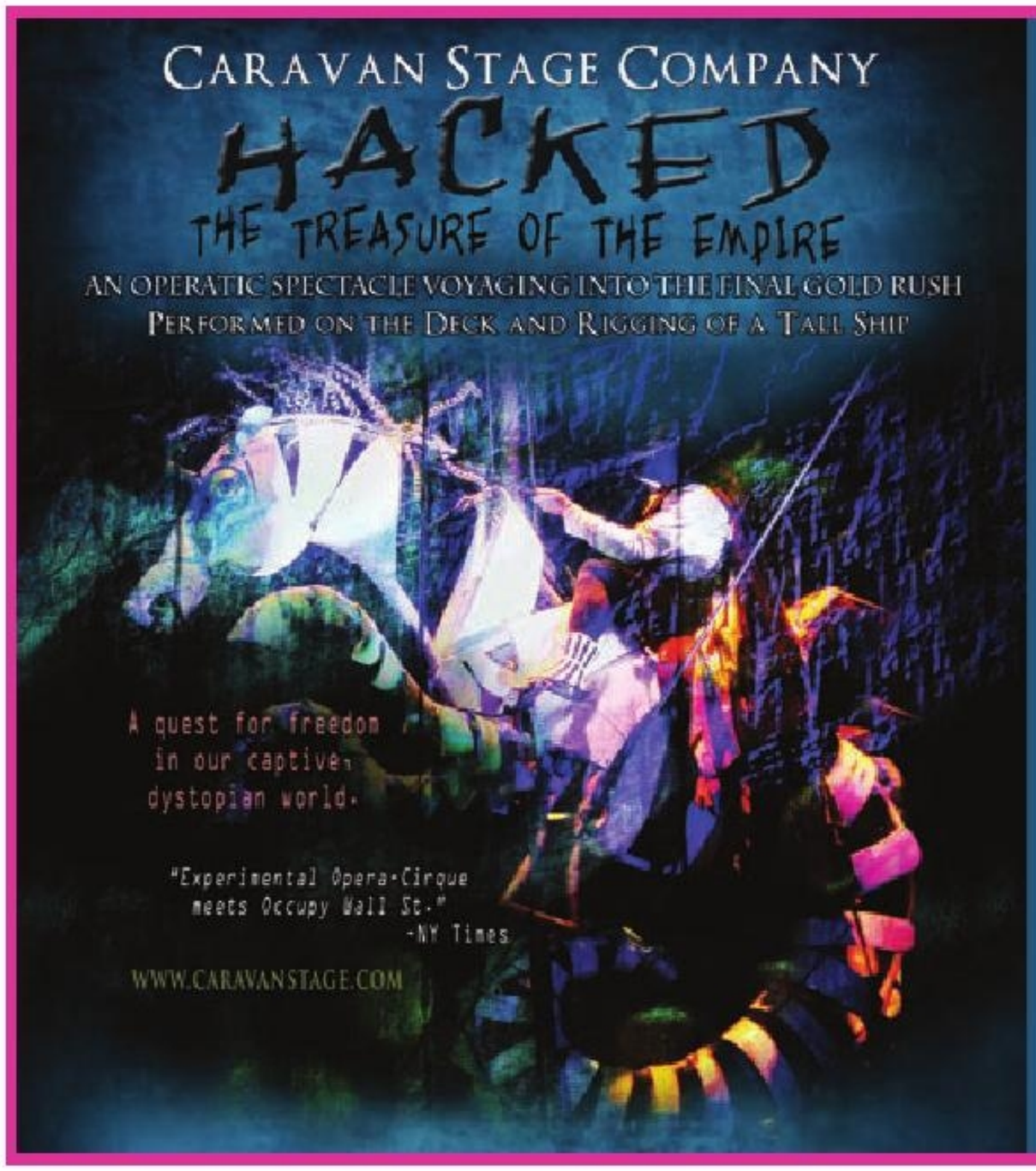
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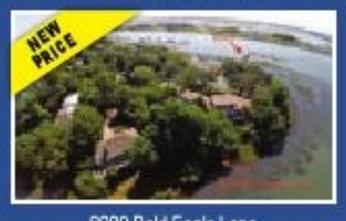

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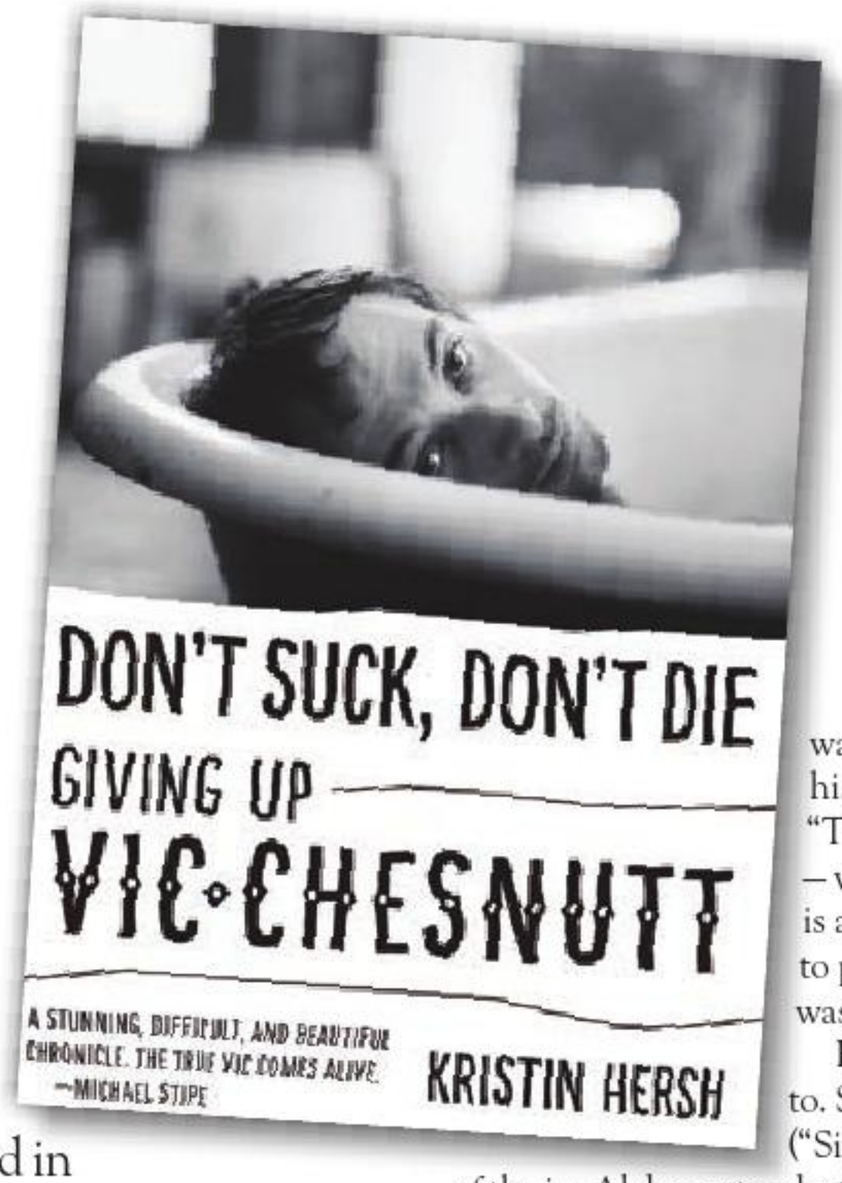
The Good Angel

Kristin Hersh's account of her intimate life with musician Vic Chesnutt is a testament to the power of hard love – and the enduring human spirit



By Brian Lampkin

Many people were introduced to the musician Vic Chesnutt by an interview with Terri Gross on NPR's *Fresh Air* in December of 2009, despite the fact that Chesnutt's first record was released in 1990. In that interview, Chesnutt talked openly about his flirtations with suicide, but made it clear that he had broken off his love affair with death. He died a few weeks later at age 42 from an overdose of muscle relaxants.

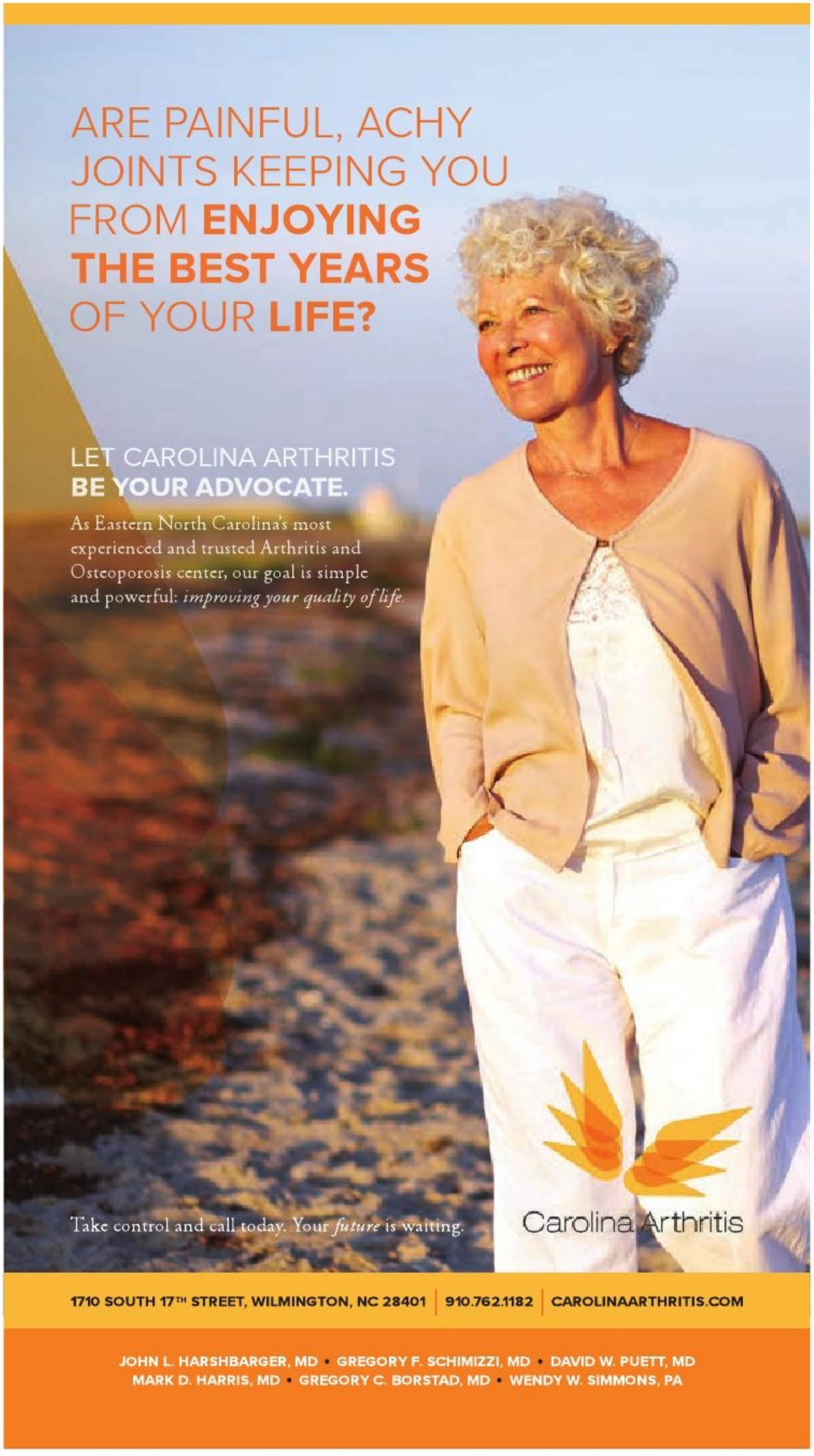
In retrospect, the interview is one of radio's saddest transmissions. The palpable hope of the uplifting story of Chesnutt's refusal to give up despite tremendous physical and psychological pain was yanked out from under the audience and we all free fell into public grief. Kristin Hersh's unrelenting chronicle of her intimate life with Chesnutt, *Don't Suck, Don't Die: Giving Up Vic Chesnutt*, (University of Texas Press, 2015, $22.95) brings her private grief to light while also refusing to hide what made Chesnutt infuriating, difficult and disturbing. Hersh's openness and honesty is a tribute to Chesnutt's own unflinching look at reality. It is a book filled with hard love, but real love.

Kristin Hersh is a musician of note in her own right. She was the force behind the influential and powerful band Throwing Muses before starting a solo career, which found her touring frequently with Chesnutt. Much of the memoir documents these tours through Europe and America – tours made even more challenging than every musicians-in-a-van story by Chesnutt's complicated paralysis. A car accident at 18 (he has admitted that he was drunk) left him at first a quadriplegic, though he was able to work his way back to some use of his arms. Hersh marvels at his ability to play guitar unlike any other human. "That car accident left you with exactly – and *only* – what you needed," Hersh writes (the entire book is addressed to Vic). "What you needed to do this, to play songs that were just a little bit too much." He was "broken in all the right places."

Hersh's style and syntax take some getting used to. She'll often leave off the subject of a sentence ("Sighed with his whole Buddha belly." "Stepped out of the icy Alabama truck stop . . . ") and at times she'll leave out unimportant details that might clarify meaning but distract from the larger story being told. After a few pages, though, I grew accustomed to and then grew fond of her usage and idiosyncrasies. Like Chesnutt's own tortured English, or rather, words bent to his own needs and uses, Hersh is after language that *reveals* Chesnutt and her relationship to him. Sometimes that takes a new approach.

And new approaches were demanded of Chesnutt by his circumstances. He could not settle for the usual chords or notes because he physically couldn't play them. He needed to combine words in new ways to more accurately express his unique vision. This book reveals his constant attention to his craft. Nearly every interaction with Chesnutt is punctuated with sudden bursts of new song lyrics and melodies spontaneously rising from the conversation at hand. It could frustrate normal modes of conversation, but Hersh could also marvel at the instinctive artist at work in front of her. A conversation about not giving up – musically or physically – turned into Vic singing a brand new couplet: "I am not made of wood / I am not a good . . . man."

He wasn't, but Hersh offers that "you were maybe a good angel." Outsiders, audiences, often presumed that Hersh and Chesnutt were married. They weren't and they toured with their respective partners Billy and Tina, and much of the book focuses on the deep joy and terrible pain of married life and loss. Chesnutt needed Tina – sometimes to physically survive – and that need tore at the relationship. And he damaged his relationship with Hersh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to the point of complete separation. But Hersh refused to go away, refused to be pushed aside by Chesnutt's isolation. Did he push friends and lovers away because he knew that the undertow of death was pulling him to sea? Hersh does not see him as selfless in that manner; more likely his innate crankiness and dissatisfaction left him as fed up with other humans as they were with him. It's also tempting to think that Chesnutt was suicidal because of the physical discomforts of his paralysis. Maybe, but Hersh's depiction suggests his affair with death predated the accident. It was in him like an extra organ at birth demanding a function that would negate its own existence. Perhaps the accident itself was an early insistence.

Paradox and contradiction are centers of Chesnutt's art — along with an unlikely musical and lyrical sweetness and longing for decent love and life. Many of his songs are convincingly optimistic because they recognize so much pain. For me, songs like "New Town" and "In My Way, Yes" — which I saw performed live in the Carrboro Arts Center and left me dazzled and even shamed by the small complaints of my life in the face of Chesnutt's powerful assertion of existence — are meaningful examples of a possible way forward in life. Of course, they are challenged by his eventual suicide and negation of their ideals, but that confuses art with life. The art lives on no matter the choices of the artist.

But Kristin Hersh doesn't have the luxury of distance. She loved the artist and the art and they are not so easily separated. This memoir is not a biography or even an appreciation of the particulars of the music. It is about the difficulties of loving a difficult man's art, and by extension, loving the creator. Hersh is often awed by Chesnutt's talent, and her futile attempts to keep the talent alive are heartbreaking. *Don't Suck, Don't Die* addresses the complex relationship of the admirer of art to the artist. Chesnutt lived up to the first command, but he was unable to let Hersh's will for him to live infuse him with his own will to go on living. In the end Hersh writes, "Then hope is gone and so are you . . . . Everything dies. Love, even."

Then she closes the book with a selected discography that directly addresses the music with lines like: "*Little* . . . capture[s] the childlike bitter soul that was Vic at his best" and words like "brilliantly executed," "heartbreaking work of exceptional gravity," "overwhelming drama," "dark magic," and "reveals itself with such beauty." The art goes on. Vic Chestnutt lives until the last person stops listening to the songs, and that won't be anytime soon.

Brian Lampkin is an owner of Greensboro's Scuppernong Books.

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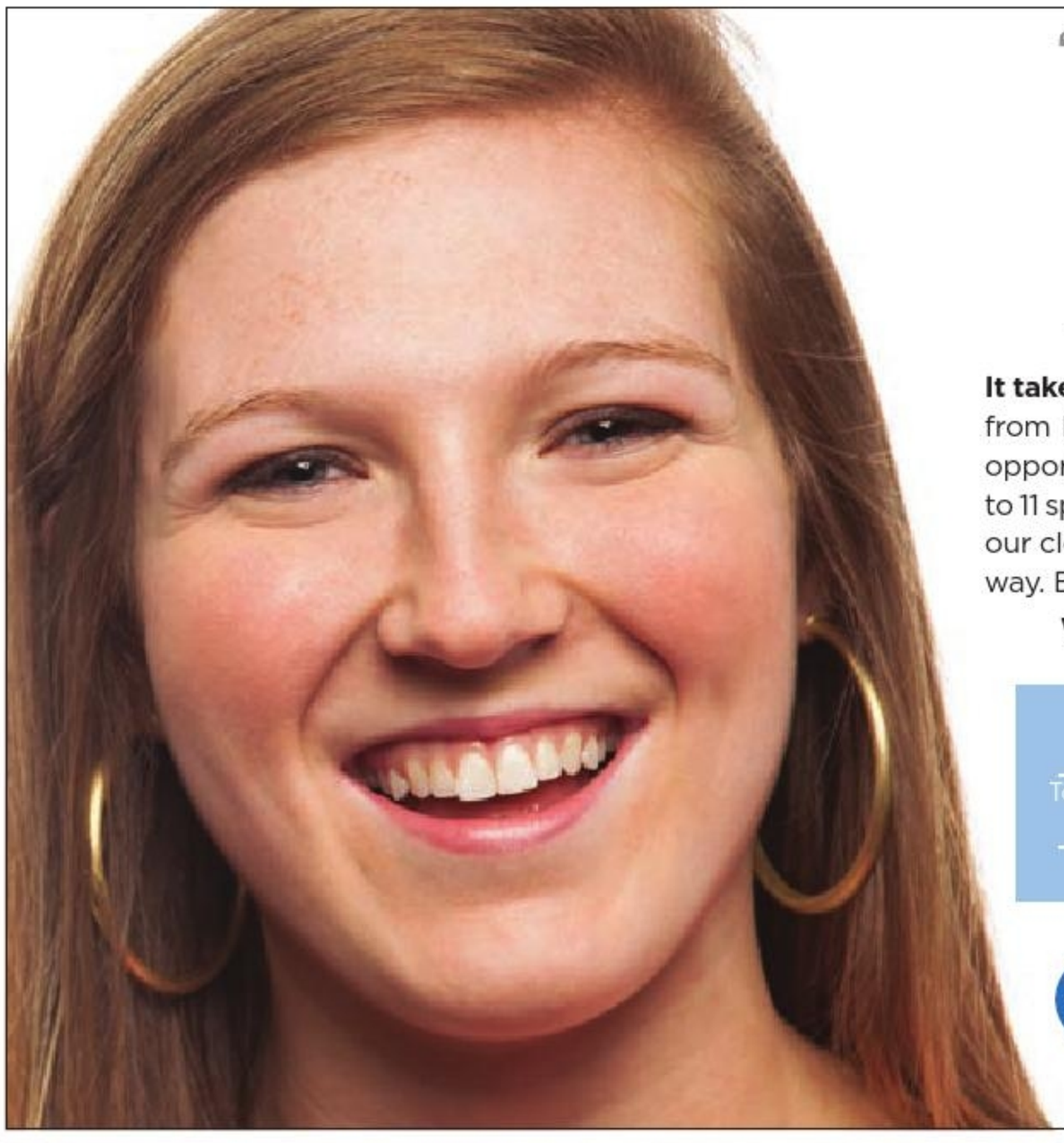

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Good Advice at Sealevel

Financial planning expert Jason Wheeler likes to remind clients that true wealth is what money can't buy and death can't take away. In the meantime, do try the tempura-fried sheepshead

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES STEFIUK

By Dana Sachs

Jason Wheeler, seated across the table from me at Sealevel Restaurant, wanted to explain behavioral finance, a theory of economics that examines the decisions people make about money and why those decisions aren't always rational.

He began by posing a question. "If you know that your favorite pair of jeans, which are normally $40, are on sale for $20 at a store across town, then you'd drive across town to buy them, right?"

"Right."

"But what if you're buying a furniture set? One is $1,852 and the same one, across town, is $1,832. You would not drive across town to save that $20, would you?"

I shook my head.

"But it's the same $20 in your wallet."

I felt oddly embarrassed. "True," I admitted.

Jason let me off the hook by explaining that, like me, a lot of people are unreasonable when they make financial decisions. "Sometimes we get lost in the way we think about money."

It's Jason's job to encourage people to act more rationally and talk more openly (with him, at least) about their financial situation. As a partner at the local advising firm Pathfinder Wealth Consulting, he's like a doctor for economic good health, helping clients devise plans to keep themselves secure. "When do you want to feel financially free to retire?" he'll ask. "At what age?"

Of course, different individuals will answer this question in different ways, but we are remarkably similar, it seems, in our modes of self-deception. "For many, retirement seems intangible and far away in time, so they can't visualize it and, therefore, don't plan for it," Jason told me. "However, tomorrow will become today, whether you plan for it or not." Most people assume that they will work beyond retirement age, but, according to a recent study released by Merrill Lynch and a strategic consulting company called Age Wave, 57 percent of the population retires sooner than expected. Doing so can throw off even the most conservative long-term strategy.

Financial advisors help clients avoid this predicament by guiding them toward developing lifetime spending plans. These plans establish budgets, provide for retirement goals, and take into account unforeseen expenditures. "Dental work, for example, can be extremely expensive," Jason said. "Grandkids. And car payments — at 60, you might think, 'I've paid off my car.' But that's not your last car." A good spending plan can accommodate surprises.

It can also accommodate the fact that sometimes the right decision isn't necessarily the most practical one. One of Jason's clients, a widow, decided to lease a car instead of buying one, which would have saved her money. The woman planned to do a lot of driving, however, and leasing meant that mechanics would maintain the car for the entire time she drove it.

"That was an informed decision," Jason said. "Sometimes people need to pay more for peace of mind."

Jason, who recently turned 40, came at his profession sideways. He grew up in small coastal towns in North Carolina, where he surfed, went fishing and, in school, excelled in math. "People told me I'd be an engineer," he said, but engineering didn't interest him and it began to bother him that he "didn't know a thing about money." In college, he started studying finance. His friends, many of them skateboarders and surfers, teased him about choosing such a buttoned-down career. Jason, though, had already recognized the value of the profession. "Whether my friends liked it or not, the world functions on money. It would be someone like me who could help them live the life they want with money."

If Jason's friends expected his professional interests to make him staid, they were wrong about that, too. He arrived for lunch wearing a business suit, yes, but he's youthful and relaxed, with the good-natured manner of a

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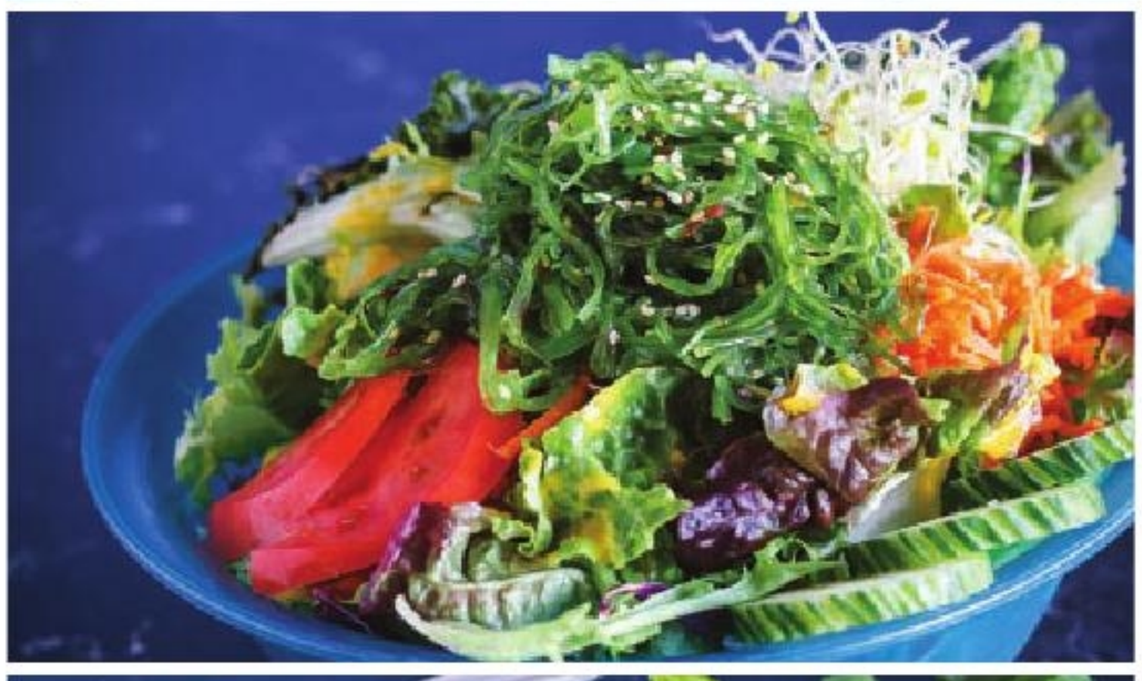

calculus whiz who likes to help his friends with their homework.

There's nothing stuffy, either, about Sealevel Restaurant, a funky no-frills spot that also happens to be one of Jason's favorites. Nikki Spears, well-known in Wilmington as the founder of Nikki's Restaurant and Sushi Bar, opened Sealevel in 2013 with an extensive menu of vegetarian and seafood dishes. (As our server put it, "the only meat we serve is sea meat.") The restaurant may also have the widest selection of vegan offerings in the city.

We started with the Big Salad, a deep bowl of fresh mixed greens, sliced cucumber, carrots and sprouts topped with sautéed kale and seaweed salad. The unusual toppings, combined with a zesty ginger dressing, gave the dish substance and a pop of flavor. Jason told me that he often orders it for lunch. "With salad, you can feel that you didn't get enough, but this is big."

Big, too, was the lentil burger. A combination of lentils and what the menu describes as "organic soaked seeds," the patty looked so much

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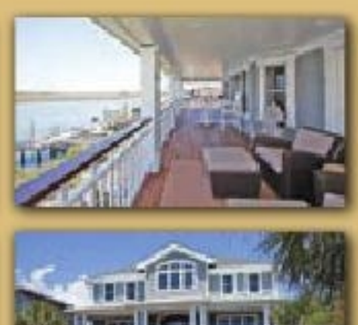

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like beef that we stared at it uncertainly when it reached our table. "That's a lentil burger?" Jason asked.

"It's supposed to be."

Just to be sure, he checked under the hood. "Yeah, that really is beans," he reported.

We were more surprised when we actually tried it. It's one thing for Sealevel to satisfy vegetarians, but it's a tougher challenge to delight meat eaters, too. "That tastes like a burger burger," said Jason. "Delicious."

Sealevel's menu includes sushi as well. The Redneck Roll combines avocado, cucumber and lettuce with tempura-fried pieces of the fresh fish of the day — in our case, local sheepshead. "That's the fish that always got in the way when I was trying to catch something else near the docks," said Jason, who still spends a lot of time on the water. These days, with our overfished oceans, the species offers a sustainable alternative to more depleted stock, its firmness and mild flavor working well with the other ingredients in the roll. As Jason put it, "You can taste the freshness."

In Jason's years as an advisor, clients have often asked him to compare their financial situation to those of others. "The more legitimate question," he told me, is, "Are they living a financially conservative, fiscally responsible life?'" In his consultations, he stresses the importance of good planning while also reminding people that "true wealth is what money can't buy and death can't take away." That kind of wisdom comes not just from studying spreadsheets and reading investment bulletins, but also from the school of surf and fish and sun and sea. It may not be completely rational, but it makes perfect sense.

Dana Sachs' latest novel, The Secret of the Nightingale Palace, *is available at bookstores throughout Wilmington.*

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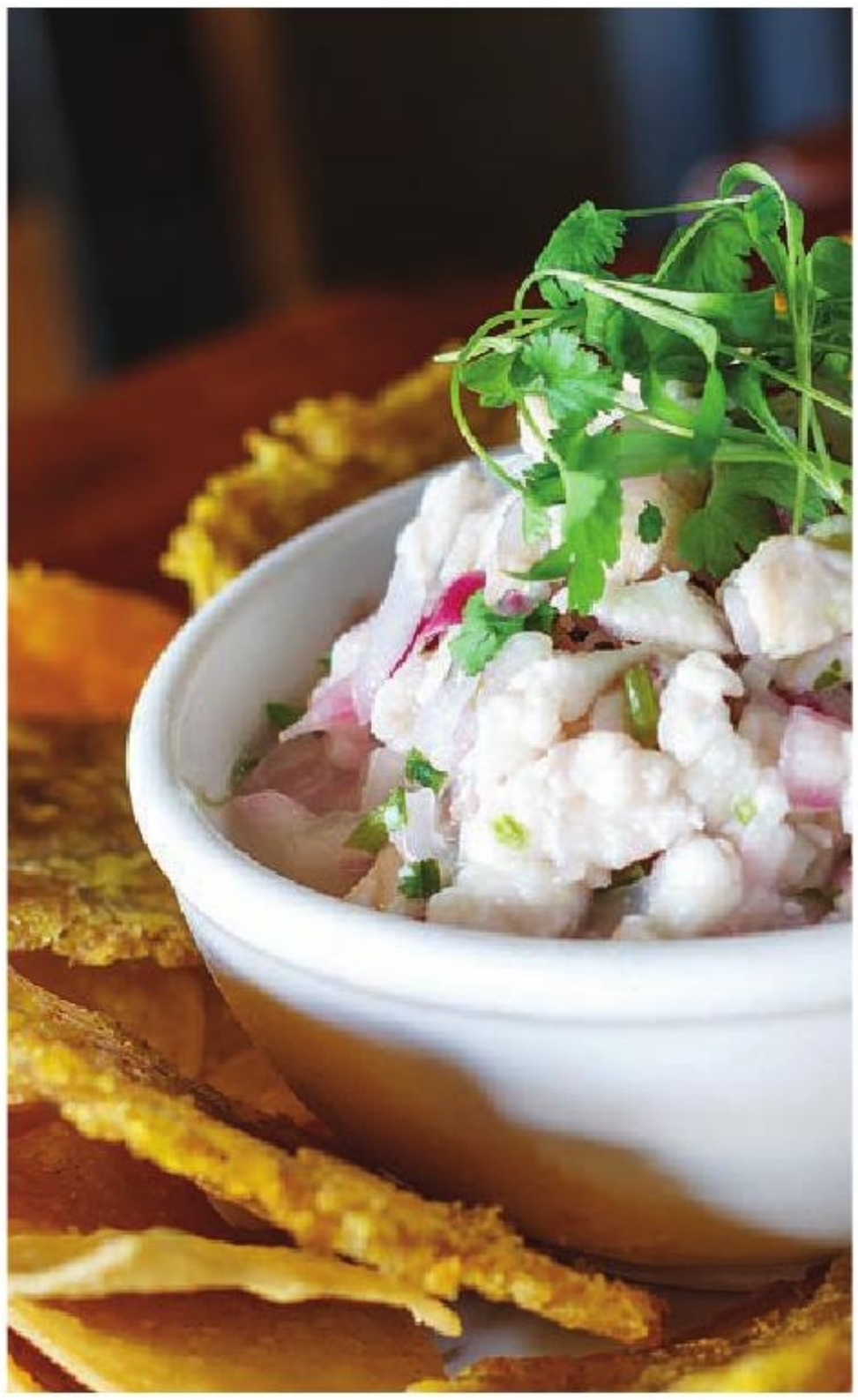
Panamanian Beat

Executive chef Sam Cahoon is shaking things up – and building a strong customer base – at Ceviche's on Wrightsville Avenue with the tastes of Panama



PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES STEFIUK

By Jason Frye

It's strange the influence culture wields over food. Take a look at Wilmington. With all the hundreds of miles of seafront and freshwater coast in our immediate area, we have only a handful of really good seafood restaurants.

Why?

Culture, to a large degree. We're a tourist town and as such, we're thick with chain restaurants serving the run-of-the-mill menus that folks feel at ease around — the flavors are the same, the styles of food are the same, the prices are the same familiar sells.

It's culture too that drives our seafood restaurants. How is it that most of our seafood places sell Calabash-style fried fish and little else? Is it that restaurants are afraid to take a chance on a new preparation or, God forbid, a new cuisine and entirely new flavors?

Fear must be a factor, or else we'd see more restaurants cooking outside the box, more owners willing to take that risk on something new, more chefs willing to stretch their skills and palates to create memorable meals.

At Ceviche's, on Wrightsville Avenue, the owner and the chef are taking bold steps to bring a new cuisine to Wilmington and evangelize one of its greatest dishes.

"Our concept originated from one of our owners, Hunter Tiblier," says Sam Cahoon, executive chef of Ceviche's Inspired Panamanian Restaurant

& Bar. "He's not native to Panama, but he grew up there, and with his wife, Laura, they opened this restaurant in an attempt to bring some of the food he'd grown up with to Wilmington."

Panamanian food? In Wilmington? Could it work? Yes, yes, and yes.

One reason it works is seafood, fresh seafood. Tiblier grew up eating ceviche, a seafood dish made by curing fresh raw fish in citrus juices and spicy aji peppers, onions, garlic and herbs; it's a popular dish in coastal Central and South America and the backbone, and namesake, of Ceviche's.

The other reason is chef Sam Cahoon.

Cahoon began his career in the kitchen a decade ago at the tender age of 16. "I got into some trouble," he explains, "and my father's punishment was simple: I was grounded until I got a job." The next day he went to (now long-gone) Bennigans and started washing dishes but quickly moved up to do prep and run the fryer.

"To me, it couldn't get any better: I got to hang out with my friends and hot waitresses all day, listen to good music, make and eat food, and to top it off, I was getting paid to do this," he says.

In the intervening years, he's matured, settling into his cooking career with a natural ease. From Bennigans, he went to Fox & Hound, then made the switch away from corporate chains and began cooking at Dockside.

"At Dockside, I discovered my passion for cooking seafood when I watched one of the older guys grill off some tuna steaks, and I thought it was one of the most beautiful things I'd seen."

After Dockside, it was stints in the kitchens of Brasserie du Soleil, Rafaella's, Sweet-n-Savory and K-38/Tower 7, all while attending the Culinary Arts program at Cape Fear Community College. Each of those experiences sharpened his skills, but it was at K-38 where his passion for Latin cuisine showed up.

"I saw how beautiful and simple and colorful food could be. I had my eyes opened to new ingredients and techniques, things very different from the classical French and Italian I had been taught. And so different from the Southern styles I grew up with."

From here, he found Ceviche's and his eyes were again opened by the culinary possibilities. No other restaurant in the region does Central and South American food like Ceviche's, which draws much of its palate from Panama, owner Tiblier's adopted home, and that sets the place apart immediately.

"We try to do something different, and our ceviches are one of the biggest differences. There are a few places around town that serve ceviche, but they're either doing ceviche as a special or a seasonal, one or two menu item thing where ours are permanent. And we serve a lot of them, with four on the menu and at least one special ceviche every day."

"But our menu is bigger than just ceviche," he continues. "Panamanian food is very simple, much milder than the more well-known cuisines of its neighbors like Mexico and Peru. Our menu really highlights the most popular dishes found in Panama."

Dishes like ceviche, yucca, arroz con pollo (rice with chicken), ropa vieja (flank steak in a spicy tomato broth) and sancocho (the Panamanian national dish and a purported hangover cure, a spicy soup of chicken, sweet potatoes, corn, yucca and plantain) grace the menu, and those traditional dishes represent Tiblier's vision for the restaurant. Cahoon's ideas on the menu come out in the specials, where he's given the room to stretch out and create dishes that play with Panamanian ingredients and flavors.

Ceviche's is a small restaurant, with an even smaller kitchen, but that's

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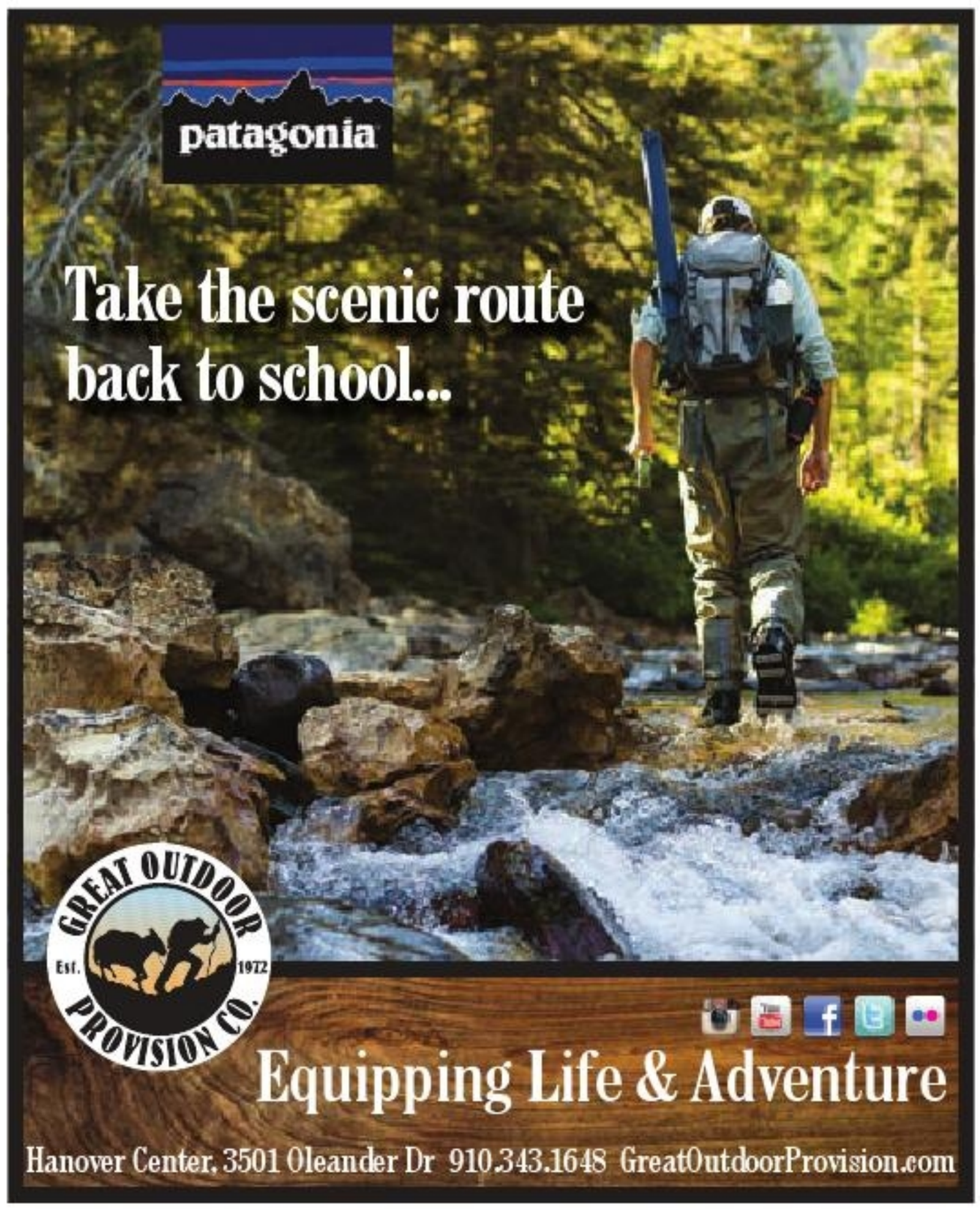
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part of its charm and its challenge. Being a small restaurant serving a never-before-seen cuisine in a tourist town is a risk, but one that's paid off. Their local following is loyal and strong, and more than a handful of regulars are familiar with the food of Panama either because they or their fathers were, like Tiblier's, in the shipping industry, or they'd surfed there or been there courtesy of the U.S. military.

It's their approach to seafood that will have an impact on the food culture of Wilmington. Once people taste it and discover the possibilities present in another culture's seafood, they'll inevitably become inspired to try cooking their own, try a new seafood dish from a new place, try stretching out beyond what they know. And they'll bring friends, introducing them to a new favorite place and a new tasty dish and slowly the food scene here will evolve.

Recipe Traditional Ceviche

Ingredients:

1–2 lbs. firm, white-fleshed fish such as mahi, snapper or swordfish filets
1 tablespoon salt
1 cup freshly squeezed lime juice (or enough to cover all ingredients)
1 red onion, diced
1 jalapeño, seeded and diced
1 bunch cilantro, washed and coarsely chopped

Instructions:

Clean fish filets and place the fish in a container; cover tightly and place in the freezer until the fish is firm but not frozen; this will make it easier to dice.

Dice fish into 1/4-inch cubes. Mix with salt and enough lime juice to coat the fish. The lime juice will allow the fish to start "cooking" while you prepare the remaining ingredients.

On a clean cutting board, dice onion and jalapeño, and chop the cilantro. Mix in with the fish. Once thoroughly mixed, place in a jar or bowl and add enough lime juice to cover all ingredients.

Cover the container and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or until fish is white, firm, and appears cooked.

Enjoy.

Jason Frye is a travel writer and author of Moon North Carolina *and* Moon NC Coast. *He's a barbecue judge, he rarely naps, and he's always on the road. Keep up with his travels at tarheeltourist.com.*

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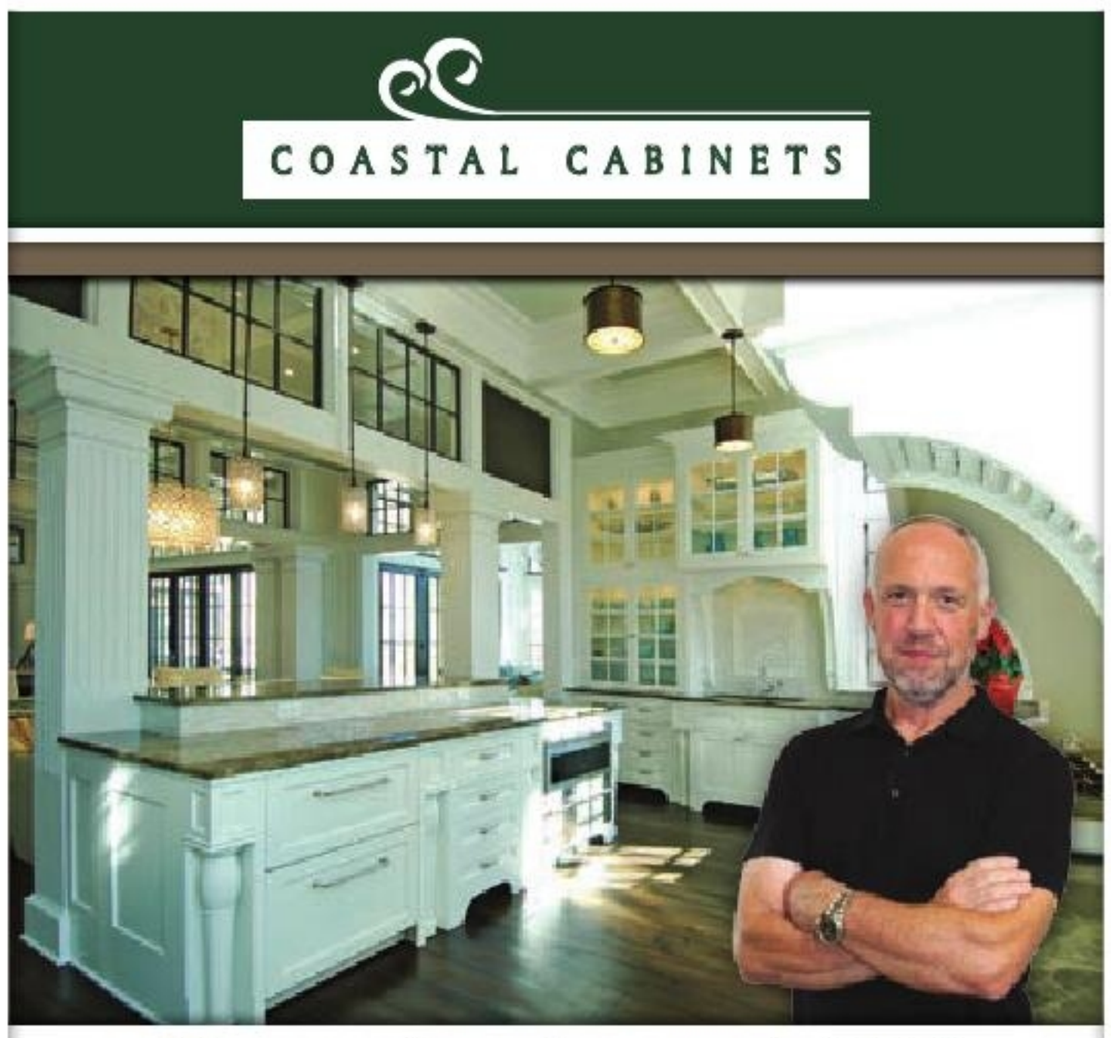

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The Watchman Cometh

As the controversy swirls around the newly released work by iconic Southern writer Harper Lee, a deeper unanswered question lies in our discussions of race in America

By Wiley Cash

When *Go Set a Watchman*, Harper Lee's long-awaited second novel, was released on July 14, 2015, we learned that Atticus Finch is and has always been a racist. Across the country, fans of *To Kill a Mockingbird* mourned the loss of a man who'd embodied our national sense of social justice for the past fifty-five years, but I wasn't one of them.

While the 1962 film adaption of *Mockingbird* starred Gregory Peck in an Academy Award-winning turn as Atticus Finch, most Americans read the novel as part of school curriculum. I came to *Mockingbird* in my 20s after completing my undergraduate degree, and I didn't see the film until I was well past 30. By then I'd encountered countless examples of racial injustice in both my country and my country's literature, and I was no more shocked by the unfair treatment of Tom Robinson, a black man accused of raping a white woman, than I was by the apparent benevolence of Finch, a white man who offers Robinson legal representation in a case that hinges on the race of both the victim and the accused.

Three days after the release of *Go Set a Watchman*, Jabari Asim, a writer and professor at Emerson College, published an essay titled "Rethinking *To Kill a Mockingbird*," in which he argues that the novel is similar to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in that it is "a form of literary ointment for white guilt, meant to soothe outbreaks of conscience while dispelling perceptions of how pervasive white supremacy is."

What does it mean to say that the novel appeases white guilt while dispelling notions of white supremacy? Perhaps the simplest answer to this question is to consider that most readers of *Mockingbird* recall Finch's spirited defense of Tom Robinson over the fact that Robinson is lynched after being found guilty; more emphasis has always been placed on the perceived bravery of Finch's courtroom performance instead of the real tragedy of Robinson's death.

Although I share both Asim's critique of *Mockingbird*'s characterization of African-Americans as well as his view of the novel as a racial balm for white culture, I'd be remiss and frankly dishonest if I refused to acknowledge the role it played in both the civil rights movement and the opening of Southern literature to a wider audience. There is no doubt that *To Kill A Mockingbird* changed people's minds, spoke to their hearts, and informed their literary tastes. It also highlighted a society and legal system that were grossly imbalanced.

It took the federal government eight more years to reach the conclusion that Harper Lee reached in 1960. At President Lyndon B. Johnson's request, the Kerner Commission sought to uncover the root of social unrest and the lack of opportunity in African-American communities. The commission's findings, while fraught with anachronistic and often crass language, reflected what anyone paying attention to race relations already knew: "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal."

For the next decade, popular culture reflected this bifurcation of American society. On television, *Good Times* showed the plight of African-Americans in the inner city; *The Jeffersons* portrayed the questions of legitimacy and social limitations faced by upwardly mobile African-Americans; and *All in the Family* used humor to display the insidious nature of racism in white America.

And then, a decade and a half after the Kerner Commission report, *The Cosby Show* debuted on NBC, and suddenly both black and white America were exposed to something they'd never seen on television: an upper-middle class African-American family that seemed unbound by racism and untethered to the limitations of the past. Cliff Huxtable was a doctor; Claire Huxtable was an attorney; their children were smart, well-behaved, and college-bound. Not only were the Huxtables an ideal African-American family, they were an ideal family, period. Suddenly, white America could feel good about the progress made since the findings of the Kerner Commission and the portrayals of the struggles of African-Americans in the previous decade. Like Asim's take on *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Cosby Show* provided "ointment for white guilt, meant to soothe outbreaks of conscience while dispelling percep-

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tions of how pervasive white supremacy is."

But that's not what I was thinking about as a 7-year-old boy sitting on the living room floor in our house in Gastonia, North Carolina, a city whose history is rife with racial division and social struggle. When I looked at Cliff Huxtable, I saw only one thing: an ideal father. Previous generations had worshipped the heroic Atticus Finch in his spectacles and suits; my hero wore bright sweaters, leather loafers and khakis, but what they didn't share in their wardrobes Finch and Huxtable made up for in worldviews. *The Cosby Show* featured countless teachable moments in which children learned about honesty, decency, fairness and equality, even if these lessons were taught in what was portrayed as a post-racial America.

After *The Cosby Show* went off the air in 1992, it seemed that Bill Cosby couldn't leave his Dr. Cliff Huxtable persona behind. He took on social issues that often found him using scathing humor and shame to preach on community and personal responsibility. He set himself as a pillar of morality in the same manner he portrayed Cliff Huxtable as the ideal father figure.

Around the time *Go Set a Watchman* was released in July, transcripts of a deposition Bill Cosby gave in a 2005 civil suit were also released. The suit involved a woman who'd accused Cosby of drugging her before sexually assaulting her. In the transcripts, Cosby casually admits to a number of affairs, and he even admits to acquiring drugs with the intent to use them on women with whom he wanted to have sex.

Go Set a Watchman reveals that Finch had spent decades working behind the scenes in Maycomb, Alabama, to ensure that African-Americans only progressed socially and economically at a rate permissible to him, a rate he wanted to control; the novel outs him as a racist, an identity he kept secret from his children and therefore secret from the readers who'd long adored him. The transcripts out Bill Cosby as a sexual deviant, a sociopath, in short, a criminal.

While readers across the country spent the long, hot July days lamenting the fall of Atticus Finch and shaking their heads over the behavior of a man I still view as Dr. Cliff Huxtable, I spent those days coming to terms with the ways in which the public faces of our heroes are often used to mask awful truths about their interior lives. And then it dawned on me: Atticus Finch and Cliff Huxtable are not men. They're not even people. They're fabrications, and they, just like the personas they create and the moral convictions they espouse, are nothing but fiction.

Wiley Cash is a New York Times *best-selling author whose second novel,* This Dark Road to Mercy, *was released last year. He lives in Wilmington.*

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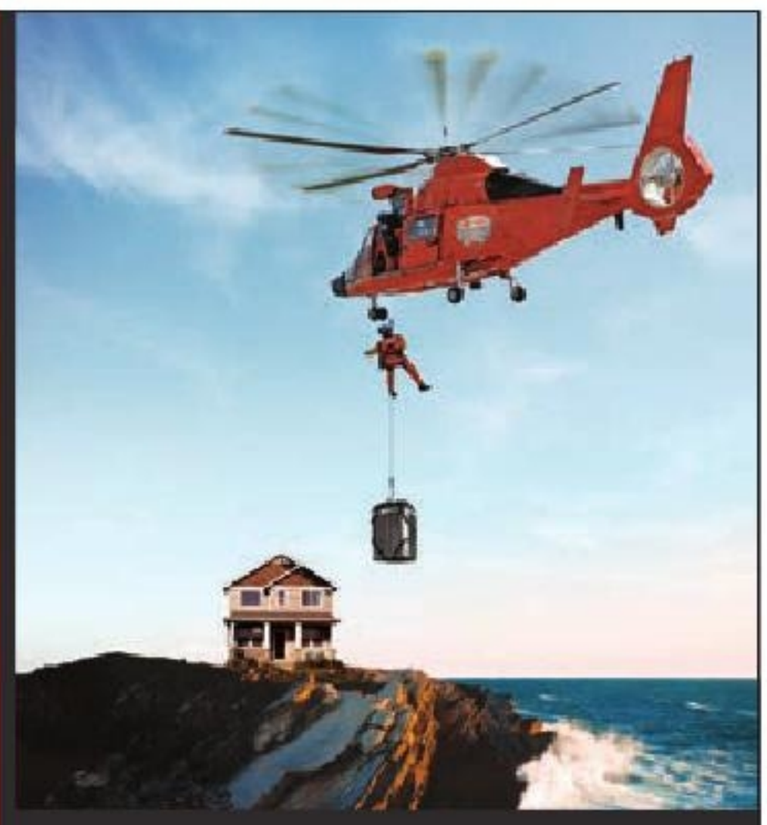

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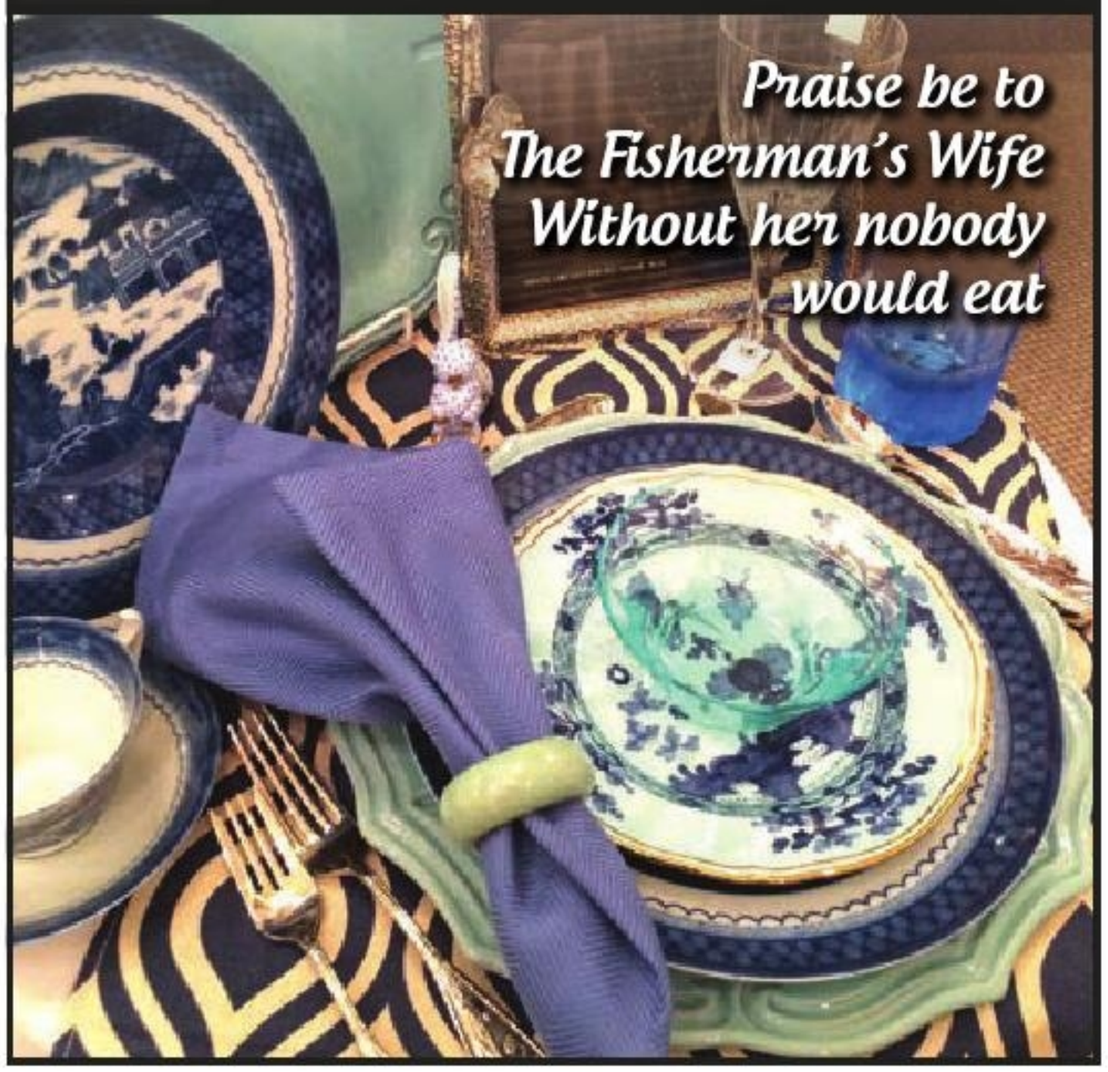

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Little Blue Heron

Handsome waders who feed in the shallows

By Susan Campbell

When you find yourself in wet habitat populated by long-legged wading birds, look closely for a smaller, handsome looking blue-gray bird: a little blue heron. Roughly one-third the size of its cousin, the great blue heron, little blues stand only a couple of feet tall. With their dark feathers and thick bills (blue-gray at the base and black at the tip), little blues are fairly easy to identify, unless they are immature — *little* little blues, if you will. White with greenish legs and a pinkish to greenish-gray bill, young little blues look more like snowy egrets. In fact, those with juvenile plumage even seem to be tolerated by egrets. Certainly young little blues benefit from the company: more protection from predators and, thanks to the snowies' active feeding behavior, a high chance of catching food items that the egrets have stirred up.

Regardless of age or plumage, little blues have a distinctive foraging behavior, their stealthy, deliberate movements making them easy to overlook. With bills held down, ready to strike, they stalk small fish and invertebrates, often in water up to their bellies, with a forward-leaning posture. Little blues are territorial and usually forage alone, away from the mix of other waders. They patiently wait for a potential meal to appear and then make a quick grab with their strong bills.

By a little blue heron's first spring, it will become mottled for some weeks as it transitions into its adult plumage. Breeding adults have a rich maroon or purple cast to the head and neck and slate-gray bodies. Courtship involves erecting feathers on their head and neck while they repeatedly point with their bills, necks fully extended. Pairs choose a spot low in vegetation at a rookery inhabited with other species of colonial waterbirds, which may include brown pelicans as well as a variety of gulls or terns. The male selects nesting material, which consists of leafless branches, and passes it to the female for placement. The platform, which is one to one-and-one-half feet in diameter, is then lined with green vegetation upon which three or four eggs will be laid. Incubation takes more than three weeks, and the nestlings require almost constant feeding for another six to seven weeks.

Young herons leave their parents and disperse shortly after fledging. Little blues may travel well away from their breeding grounds mid-summer in search of food. Individuals have been reported as far west as our mountains in July and August. Migratory little blue herons fly much farther: wet habitat throughout Central and South America come fall.

This species of heron has experienced population decline over the past century due to habitat loss. Coastal development has reduced the amount of maritime forest and marshes along our coast. Fortunately, spoil islands, created from dredge material that has been repopulated by native vegetation, have proven to be good substitutes. Interestingly, little blue herons escaped the ravages of hunters in the early 1900s given their lack of long, showy breeding plumes. However, with the increasing number of predators associated with human development (raccoons, opossums and even cats), significant efforts continue to be necessary in order to protect our breeding populations from multiple threats.

Susan would love to receive your wildlife sightings and photos. She can be contacted by email at susan@ncaves.com.

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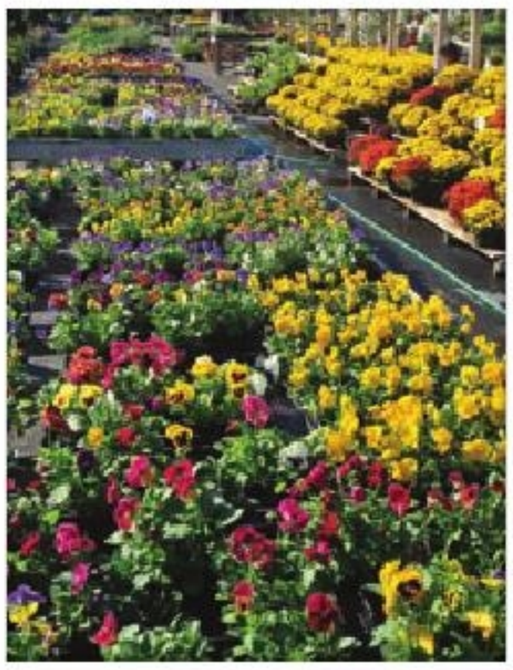

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The Old Lloyd Place

A tumbledown house on the edge of town was the heart's true shelter

By Virginia Holman

Once upon a time, my husband and I lived in an old Carolina-T farmhouse. This was twenty-five years ago; we were newlyweds, and the house was the first we'd occupied as husband and wife. The classified ad described it along the lines of "country living close to town."

The main house was a lanky, two-story structure, graced by full front porch with a peeling haint blue ceiling. Perpendicular to the main house, a series of adjoining rooms shot-gunned one into the other. Each room was an awkward half-step down into the next, until you arrived in the kitchen, whose centerpiece was an enormous crumbling fireplace, used as a stove in another era. The place had a green painted tin roof rugged with rust, beadboard walls, wide planked heart pine floors, counterweight-hung windows with old, rippled glass, a tiny, mostly functional bathroom, and a single closet in the bedroom that was all of 10 inches deep.

Rent alone was utterly unaffordable, over a third of our take-home pay. But we were smitten with the house and wild for each other. We felt compelled to make it our own. As we drove away from the rental office, the countryside shimmered. My head was dizzy. I felt as if we were traveling inside the light.

We moved at the start of summer, in a pulsing, dead-aired heat. The edges of a muddy pond across the field had cracked like the scales of some ancient beast. Inside the house, it was shady, if not significantly cooler. In keeping with the historic feel of the home, it came without air-conditioning, and the old fuse box could handle little more than the refrigerator and the lights. A window unit was out of the question. I opened two windows, one to the front porch, one to the back, and a cross breeze flowed through the bedroom. My new husband left to return the U-Haul, and when he came back a spectacular thunderstorm tore open the sky. We lay on the bed and watched the water sluice off the roof. When it slackened, near sunset, I stood on the back porch. Wisps of steam illuminated the outbuildings and the fields. We were home.

At about 6 a.m. the next morning, we awoke to the sounds of trucks and shattering glass. We walked down the driveway and peered across the street. Have I failed to mention that "close to town" meant 300 feet from the back of a strip mall with a small recycling operation? We didn't think much of it when we signed the lease, since a high row of ligustrum largely blocked the view. The fact was, we were on the last rural county road before Carrboro. "Country living close to town" didn't exactly mean we were living in the country. Rather, it meant that town was closing in on us. We simply decided the noise in the morning was a sort of alarm clock, like the crow of a rooster.

We were so enthusiastic about the place that we may have oversold its qualities to our families. When my father and brother-in-law arrived to deliver an enormous spoke-wheeled lawnmower (our registry was more Home Depot than Williams-Sonoma), they were conspicuously silent. We showed them around the place. As they inspected the property, we were informed that much of the foundation was open and that the house was propped up on severed tree trunks. We learned that the fuses in the fuse box were practically antiques. They pointed out that we didn't have a furnace, simply two propane space heaters that vented out of the crumbling chimneys. There was no insulation. Where we saw rustic beauty, they saw decay. Where we saw adventure, they saw danger.

As each problem was revealed, we became rather defensive. Certainly, the widening hole in the bathroom floor was a problem, but the rest was just what we thought of as charming, quirky, romantic. So what if the hot water heater only warmed enough for one four-minute shower? We'd just double up. Seriously, what was the problem?

They became quiet again, then drove off in a cloud of dust to the hardware store. They returned with a bagful of old-time fuses, smoke detectors, and deadbolts. My brother-in-law spent an hour cutting through the thick pine door to install a lock. My husband tied a bandanna around his head and fired up the lawnmower. My father said, "Well, Virginia," judiciously ended his sentence there, then sat on the porch with a Scotch. Later that evening, my husband pointed out three copperheads to his brother, who laughed, not unkindly, and said, "You are both out of your minds." Perhaps, but we were also spectacularly happy.

That summer we explored the property. A private path led to a creek with moss-covered banks, perfect for wading. Down the road a couple of old-timers by the name of Crabtree had a roadside stand. Mrs. Crabtree would sit silently on a metal glider in an immaculate housedress. If we said hello, she'd look at us, but not speak. Her husband did all the talking. He grew Silver Queen corn. Cucumbers. Tomatoes. One day he asked us where we lived. Just up the road, we told him, in the farmhouse. Mrs. Crabtree stopped the glider and leaned forward so suddenly that I startled. "That's the old Lloyd place," she said. Her husband told us that Carrboro had once been known as Lloydville. We returned to our farmhouse and rocked on the front porch with a rather proprietary air. After that, when people asked where we lived, we said, rather smugly, "The old Lloyd place."

Summer eventually relented, and we continued to love our house for the next two years. As our families had predicted, there were some moments of concern: Teenagers broke in, stole a jug of pennies and a VCR, and were apprehended; two men squatted in one of the outbuildings and asked to stay (we declined, but began a long volunteer stint at the local homeless shelter); a smoking electrical socket ignited; copulating animals yowled under the floors; a cold snap had us wearing our coats and hats to bed; field mice nested in the closet.

Then, the owner's nephew decided he wanted to rent the house, and our lease was terminated abruptly. I wept and wept. We had a month to find a new place and move. We were furious and heartbroken to be cast out of our home. Unable to find another farmhouse, we rented a small ranch at the bottom of a hill in a nice suburban neighborhood. We had a dishwasher. A washer-dryer. Beige walls. It was a five-minute drive to work. Our families were relieved.

We, however, felt confined. So we hatched our escape plan. Within a year, we'd scrimped and saved enough to buy two plane tickets to London, plus not quite enough to spend several months stumbling around Europe on the cheap. I left my job. My husband put grad school on temporary hold. Our families fretted. No one in my immediate family had ever left the country, and the whole scheme was, if not radical, certainly not at all practical.

No matter: We were free, unfettered by insurance payments, investments, loans and tax deductions. Our youthful choices — be they to live in a tumbledown house or to spend every cent traveling — secured us nothing other than a profound joy and its memory, which is, to us, the heart's true shelter.

Author Virginia Holman teaches in the creative writing department at UNC Wilmington and occasionally guides with Kayak Carolina.

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and duskier shadows drape
the shoulders of Carolina Belle,

mellowing outward from the pit,
the flesh grown close
into a furrowed pericardium, scarlet
and sweet at its vitals.

— Valerie Nieman

The Queen
OF FUSS AND BOTHER

Party maven Becky Shuford opens up on how to entertain your guests in style

By Jason Frye • Photographs by James Stefiuk

Question: What does one wear when one will be interviewing the quintessential Southern hostess in her own home?

My first thought was, "Pants. I can't wear shorts, so I'll wear light, comfortable, clean pants." Then I questioned my shoes. Flip-flops were out, so it was between sneakers or something dressier. I settled on sneakers, but only if I wore a shirt with buttons, lots of buttons, like a row of buttons down the front. So, pants and a button-down — a light button-down because it's hot and humid and I sweat but I don't want to sweat in this lady's house — and clean, presentable sneakers.

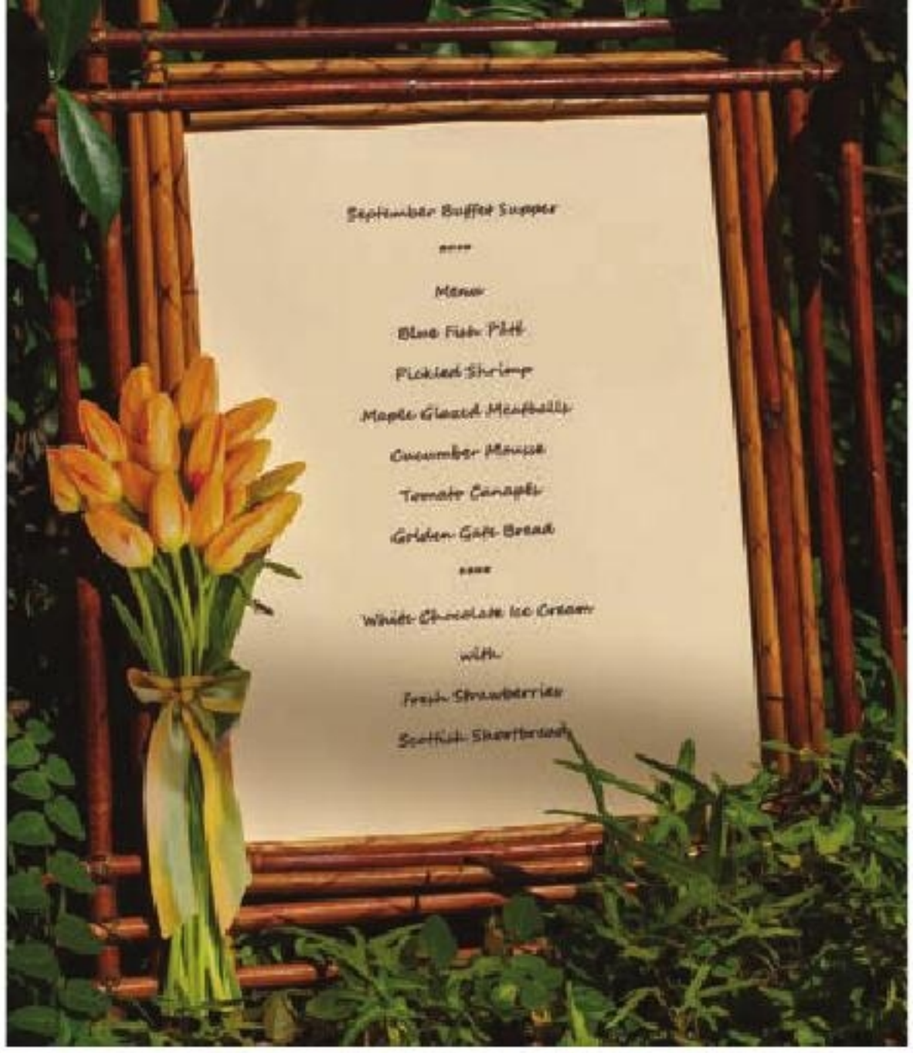
And socks. Real socks, not athletic socks, because she may require I remove my shoes upon entry of her no doubt immaculate home.

This is not my usual process when preparing for an interview. Typically I read up on whom I'll be speaking with or, in the case where I'm not talking to any sort of public figure, I'll read up on their area of expertise, take notes, write some questions, then make sure my fly is zipped and mustache trimmed before setting out to the interview. Wardrobe rarely gets a thought beyond "don't wear a T-shirt."

Becky Shuford is a little different. She is the very model of the Southern hostess, and as a friend said of her, "In the dictionary, Becky's picture is beside lovely Southern belle." Shuford wrote and self-published a book, *Smidgens*, where she draws out her thoughts on entertaining, etiquette and the essentials of being an excellent, gracious hostess.

"My daughter, Tracy, says I love the 'fuss and bother' of entertaining," Shuford says. "I do. Fuss and bother, pomp and circumstance, call it what you will, it's part of the fun of hosting friends and loved ones in your home."

Then she looks at me very seriously. "There is no gift more precious or lovely or meaningful than to share your private space and a meal with guests. To be invited into someone's home is not a thing to be taken lightly or casually."



Immediately I think about my shoes and uncross my legs, tucking my feet as far under the chair as they'll go.

We're sitting in a cozy patio room in Shuford's Oleander Drive home. When I arrived, she took me on a brief tour: sitting room and den, kitchen, formal dining room, the room we're in now. Everything in her home is in its place and there's a thoughtful feel to each room. The art on the walls — local and regional artists showing scenes of North Carolina life, portraits of her two children — was carefully curated by Shuford — a former art history teacher — to fit the visual and psychic tone of each room; the furnishings are arranged and planned so that fabric, color and pattern are distinct but cohesive. Everywhere there are framed photos of her and her husband, Ferrell, their daughter and son, Tracy and Lindsey, and their grandchildren.

Shuford's not thinking of her shoes. She doesn't have to; she's marvelously put together. In a chair opposite me, she sits with her legs crossed neatly at the ankle, her hands either resting on her lap or taking a quick note on a pad she keeps nearby, and her outfit impeccable. Suddenly I feel like I should've tucked my shirt in.

"My senior year of college, all the girls in my dorm were walking around with bridal magazines and rings on their fingers, but I didn't want that yet," she says. "I wanted to work, mature, live some of my life before I settled down."

The world was different when Shuford was a 24-year-old unmarried schoolteacher, "an 'old maid' in the eyes of many," she says. Then, many a young woman went to college for her MRS degree, though the first signs of the sexual revolution were showing. Shuford felt empowered by this and the support of her parents.

"Mumsey and Dad would run into friends and be asked, 'Does Rebecca have someone special in her life yet?' and Dad would answer, 'She's earned her bachelor's [degree] and she's using it.' He knew that when it was time to settle down, I'd know."

While teaching in Atlanta in the early 1960s, she met her now-husband, Ferrell, then a medical student, and knew it was time. They courted six months, he asked, and they married three months later.

One of the gifts Shuford received from her mother was a guide to homemaking. In the book were detailed notes on table settings, recipes, menu planning,

notes on how to shop and create a tasteful centerpiece, simple cocktails, tips for entertaining for a range of occasions and guests. "Mumsey," she says in *Smidgens*, "relished her chosen role of wife and mother" and wanted her daughter to find the same pleasures in those roles.

Homemaking is a funny word, though. It's one that's evolved quite rapidly, and those changes aren't lost on Shuford, who says younger generations "entertain as their time and the times allow." As two-income or single-parent families have become the norm and as modes of communication have changed, throwing a party has become something far less formal than what she is used to doing.

"Today everyone texts or emails a few days ahead of time, 'You want to come over?' 'Yeah. What time?' I like to do things more formally. I'll ask you in person or on the phone well in advance of the party and see if you're interested in attending. If you are, three weeks to a month before the party, you'll receive an invitation in the mail with a request to RSVP."

I tell her that to my generation, a month's notice is unfathomable, a gulf of time, but that there's something I like about the official nature of a party planned so far in advance and being invited in such a way.

"Oh yes," she says. "You feel honored to be invited to this party. And the written invitation, well it gives you something to anticipate. You have something to look forward to."

In so many ways, this turns a party into an event. Which is how she likes it.

Shuford is also very careful in planning whom she invites to parties. These aren't come-one-come-all gatherings; they're curated happenings in the sense that she's thought about the mix of personalities and interests her guests bring. Which makes sense; after all, my wife and I know which of our friends would make good Cards Against Humanity players and who is better suited to a screening of a so-bad-it's-good movie. This curating is something we all do, just not in such a formal manner.

There's something appealing about Shuford's formality in throwing plated dinner parties (as opposed to cocktail or buffet parties) we contemporary entertainers can absorb into our own styles. As you begin to plan, a sense of anticipation builds and you can't help but get excited by the prospect of the party. (Shuford grows as excited remembering parties she threw forty years ago as the ones she threw this past Fourth of July.) And as guests receive first verbal then written invitations, that anticipation spreads.

It is in this way Shuford guides her parties like the maestro of an orchestra — arranging the guests and building their anticipation piece by piece, thinking of the ways they'll harmonize with one another.

She adds another layer of anticipation the day of the party by hand-writing or printing a menu for the evening and displaying it for all the guests to see. She has a drawer full of these. Menus for three course, four course, birthday, graduation, Christmas, Thanksgiving, cocktail, cookout, buffet and brunch parties, each either written, typed or printed; oftentimes illustrated.

"Oh, how guests love to see that menu. They walk in the door and see a beautifully laid table and the menu and they have something to look forward to," she says.

The serving of the food is the final movement as Shuford's menu — one crafted not only to match the season and reason for gathering, but also matching the tenor of the guest list — strikes the right notes and guides the evening to its conclusion: soft conversation over after-dinner drinks.

"My kids laugh at how I do things, but I get such joy out of it. I know every generation has a way of doing things and this is mine but not necessarily yours. Even so, I told my children they should know how to properly entertain, and that means planning. With thought about how your home presents itself, how the evening will be conducted, who will be in attendance, and what you will be serving, anyone can throw a memorable party."

Talking with Becky Shuford and watching her grow more and more excited as she recalled parties past made me wonder what my wife and I could do differently when we entertain. Sure, many times it's informal — burgers and sides and beers on the deck or pasta with fresh tomatoes from our garden — but what could we do to elevate even a simple, spur-of-the-moment get-together? And how could we take a more formal, eat-in-the-dining-room evening to the next level? Should we take them to the next level?

After a moment of contemplating our next party, I bade Shuford farewell, but not before she retrieved a pair of kitchen shears and snipped a few pieces off a houseplant I'd admired — "Take some cuttings," she said, "they're wonderfully easy to root and grow" — and I took the moment to ask one final question.

"Becky," I said, "should I have brought a hostess gift? You spent so much time with me and opened your home to me . . ."

"Don't be silly," she said. "Of course not. I didn't feed you, did I?"

Fuss & Bother Basics for the Perfect Party

ESSENTIAL DISHES

Mac and Cheese: "From scratch, never from a box."

Fruit Salad: "Oh, it's both healthy for the children and delightful to adults."

Pimento Cheese: "It's a Southern staple."

Homemade Bread: "A friend told me, 'If you burn the roast and your bread is homemade and delicious, the men will say the meal is a success,' so I always bake my own bread."

Spoonbread: "A simple dish that's easy to make and goes well with fish and sides."

Seafood: "We are so blessed with a fresh variety of seafood all year; you simply must know how to prepare shrimp and at least one fish."

Pound Cake: "It's so versatile. You can have it for any meal — toast it for breakfast, have it with tea or coffee, and have it for dessert — and you can freeze any leftovers."

Lemon Pie: "Even if you can't make a proper meringue, at the very least, learn to make a lemon chess pie. The acidic bite of the pie is so good following a seafood meal."

ENTERTAINING FOR . . .

Summer Parties: "Send out your invitations three to four weeks ahead of time. Serve cool dishes like gazpacho or vichyssoise [cold soups]. In the South, too many women pride themselves on serving piping hot dishes, but I find that in summer, cooked is often hot enough. You can begin your meal with a cold soup or appetizer, serve a hot main course, then end the meal with toasted pound cake, fresh whipped cream and chilled fruit; that mix of hot and cold is delightful."

Winter Parties: "It's easier to entertain in winter. With more quiet days and less travel on the schedule for your guests, parties are easier to plan and only require a couple of weeks notice. I like to serve stews and hearty breads, dishes that are meatier. Mulled wines and other warm drinks are ideal."

Hurricane Parties: "I always make at least a gallon of tea ahead of time (right now I'm making two: ginger mint and pineapple mint); it's so refreshing to have a stash of cool tea on hand. I like to prepare a big pot of soup and a few loaves of good bread if we see a hurricane on the horizon; it's easy to prepare, hold, heat, and serve."

Keg Parties: I so wanted to ask Becky what to prepare for a keg party or some other beer-soaked bacchanal, see if there was a particular plastic cup she preferred for flip cup or if she had thoughts on paddle v. no paddle for beer pong, but I couldn't bring myself to do it.

HOSTESS GIFTS

- Always include a thank-you card with any hostess gift.
- The best gifts are something edible or a plant.
- Local honey in a pretty jar. Tie it with a bow and attach a hand written card.
- Rosemary Pennies [tiny cheese biscuits] in a little jelly jar.
- Homemade bread or pound cake.
- "I often give a piece of my reindeer antler fern," says Shuford. "It's easy to start and easy to grow, and it's unusual."

True Turtle Love

How a wabi-sabi trapezoidal turtle became home to a visionary architect and a centerpiece of Martin Street's rebirth

Photographs and Story by Mark Holmberg

Whoa, look at that place!

That's what came to mind during a motorcycle exploration of the port side of Wilmington on a battleship grey day last December.

It's a favorite thing to do. Walking, biking, motoring . . . sizing up haunted houses and vacant commercial buildings for offbeat dream-home renovations.

This was a railroad-side dump on Martin Street just off South Third with a crazy shape and roof like a turtle's back. In fact, it squatted there as if it had crawled out of the monster debris pile on the other side of the track. But cut some big holes for windows, let in some light, scare off the hoboes . . . ride the motorcycle up the ramp right into your living room!

Two weeks later we returned to find much of the yard trash cleaned up. The pie-shaped block building had started turning blue.

And we met the guy who beat us to it.

"I first saw it when I was driving around lost maybe fifteen years ago," said 43-year-old Kevin Pfirman. "I couldn't believe my eyes. It's trapezoidal!"

Probably only an architect would sum up the tough ol' turtle with that one word, and that's what Kevin is — a local architect. He's also the guy you'd pick out of central casting to rehab this place. Lean and leathery, brown and hard as a Brazil nut.

Nature Boy. A surfer who grew up dodging rebar and rusty steel in the menacing break at Atlantic City, New Jersey.

"Oh man, that's unique," he recalled thinking during his first glance. "There's not another site like this in town."

And probably, the world.

When the lease ran out on his architectural office on North Fourth Street last fall, he drove by the turtle again and again, falling in love with its "railroad industrial design . . . Everything's got this wabi-sabi patina."

It reminded him of the raw and rusty break at Atlantic City and the renegade vibe captured in Ron Howard's classic surf/skate documentary *Dogtown and Z-Boys*.

"It had that gritty, wrong-side-of-the-tracks feel. I can cause all the trouble I want here." So he tracked down the owners, Clayton Williams and his wife, Dottie.

Williams, cut from similar (but older) cloth, had run his trucking company out of the building. Before that, another trucking firm had originally built it in 1920.

The building's wedge shape was an organic fit for the lot, Kevin explained. "It's the setbacks." The railroad tracks slice the property into a scalene triangle — no sides are equal. "They just built to a point where they ran out of room for garage doors" for the loading docks.

"Was there a drawing made?" he asked skeptically. "I don't know . . . I don't think there's a reason for another building like this anywhere."

The surfer and the trucker shook hands on a $175,000, owner-financed, no-money-down deal, and Kevin, surprised and grateful at his good fortune, went to work.

By March 4, Kevin's relentless, termite-like attack on the tough, trapezoid turtle was revealing the prince within.

"I want to quit work and just work on this," he said.

The roof, wiring and HVAC work was done. So were the rough-hewn bathroom and hallway, made from hardwood pallet planks.

The "battleship dazzle" paint job was pretty much done.

He'd called me over to lay a few blocks to fill in an old vent on the side of the building while he and his draftsman/close-friend/fishing buddy Channing Glover sank railroad ties for fence posts into the rock-hard ground of the yard. (Don't dare run into one!)

Channing is one of those guys who never shirks a task and wades right into a nasty chore with an untroubled smile, like Deets from *Lonesome Dove*. He's a key part of the Martin Street makeover, and Kevin knows how blessed he is to have a friend like him.

"He brought me over here the first time," Channing recalled between thrusts with the posthole diggers that you could feel through your shoes. "He opened the door . . . Oh my God! Rats!"

But he, too, fell for the funky old turtle.

"I love coming over here. Every little part of it is a challenge."

And a revelation, Channing added. As they restored and explored and matched and cajoled, they figured out the thought processes of the craftsmen who built it.

"Every weld is different," Kevin said, certain the unique steel bowstring trusses were built on-site, by feel, along with the yellow pine rafters.

Together they translated the architectural haiku of the building, preserving and expanding on the Japanese wabi-sabi aesthetic of imperfection, asymmetry, austerity, roughness.

"You don't want to undo that," Kevin said.

During a lunch break at the nearby Harp that bright afternoon, Kevin explained he came to North Carolina for architecture school at UNC Charlotte, where he met Channing. The surf then pulled him east to Wilmington, where he married and had two boys. (He since split but shares custody.)

His college thesis — the siting and design of coastal buildings of North Carolina — sums up his architectural anchor. "We don't necessarily build the way we should" near the water, he said, picking at his fish sandwich. (No wonder he's so wiry.)

We still use a lot of wood, metal and masonry, materials that don't mix well with water and salt, he explained. Why not "aerodynamic fiberglass panels, like a boat? All things maritime. Stainless everything. How cool would it be to wax your house," like a surfboard, he asked, instead of painting it?

The summer grew hot as the turtle was inspected and approved, and Kevin gradually moved in. We'd stop in to see him or run into him on the beach with his girlfriend.

His current projects were unfolding — an organic house in Costa Rica; a modernistic house on Wrightsville Beach incorporating his sea-friendly philosophy; an outdoor concert shell/amphitheater that seats 5,000 just off the new Riverwalk on the starboard side of downtown.

His shoulder — a torn labrum— was killing him, but he kept postponing surgery for surf trips, his design jobs and, of course, his pet project on Martin Street. He had spent — gladly — twice what he had planned on the renovation, he admitted as we sat inside by the giant, rough-hewn custom window on a surly hot July afternoon. The HVAC had the old shipping building comfortably chill. Stevie Ray Vaughan added to the mellowness.

"I like life-specific things," he said. "Anything we design looks like it grew there."

Or crawled there.

He looked around the space, ticking off all the little unfinished details.

"The hardest thing is knowing when to stop," he said.

Indeed. Without those undone touches, the trapezoidal turtle would magically lose its wabi-sabi.

And it might just crawl away.

The Kirkegaard Philosophy

The chance to acquire and restore the ailing Miles Costin Mansion became both a passion and a family blessing

By Ashley Wahl · Photographs by Rick Ricozzi

Houses with storied pasts are best suited for folks who can spin a proper yarn — even and perhaps especially when the teller is prone to romantic embellishments.

Built in 1855 for a town commissioner and his wife, Catherine, the Miles Costin House on South Fifth Avenue, like the historic Latimer House on South Third, has the imposing presence characteristic of Italianate architecture mixed with the ornate touches (bracketed eaves, balustraded porches, carved come-and-go staircase) that exude Victorian charm. In 1871, Mrs. Robert Ramsom's Female Seminary operated here, and in 1885, an insurance agent named John Atkinson added a Second Empire-style mansard roof, stretching the structure to three full stories. Among the mansion's many incarnations, it served as a boarding house for a short time before eventually falling into foreclosure — but never ruin.

The family who lives there now, Dr. Gary Kirkegaard, Tony Britt-Kirkegaard and 14-year-old twins Austin and Brittney (adopted as preemie newborns), is, perhaps, as storied as the house.

Although they've only owned it for a year, their contributions to the mansion's legacy are well under way. But the real pleasure of touring the Miles

Costin House with Gary and Tony, aside from the exquisite history and décor, is witnessing the playful dynamic of two men who could have come straight off the set of a family sitcom.

Tony is the character whose larger-than-life personality and over-the-top stories are complemented if not enhanced by Gary's sense of groundedness and poise. Just ask the twins to tell you which parent used to show up with a crown and scepter for PTA duties at Vandora Springs Elementary School in Garner.

"All the kids called me the King of Vandora," chimes Tony, who is seated at the granite kitchen island where the soft glow of a lemon-scented candle contrasts the freshly painted red walls.

"Of course you egged that on," says Gary, chasing a faint Nebraska accent with a smile that begets an air of mystique.

After nearly twenty years as partners, the couple exchanged vows during a private triple wedding ceremony on a seaside cliff in Massachusetts in 2009 — "It had just rained, the sun came out, and a giant rainbow appeared behind us, honest to God," says Tony.

Before they walk their guest through their 6,700-square-foot home (includes finished basement apartment), they share their own story of landing here. Truly, it is more of a saga. It starts with how they met.

"You won't get the *CliffsNotes* version from him," says Gary, who smiles apologetically as Tony begins painting a scene from 1989 of a Charlotte nightclub called Scorpios and the mysterious stranger across the room.

"I smiled at him and he smiled back," recalls Tony. "When I finally worked up the courage to ask him if he'd like to dance, he said, 'No . . . But I wouldn't mind going out on the patio and talking. It's really smoky in here and I can't stand cigarette smoke.'"

Tony followed Gary, slipping his own packet of cigarettes into the garbage on the way out the door.

"I like to tell everybody that was the first deception," says Gary.

Tony continues.

"We had a great conversation. I learned that he was an Eagle Scout and a pharmacist . . ."

But after talking all night, they went their separate ways.

"Neither one of us had a cellphone," says Tony. "We did not exchange phone numbers or last names. He told me that he worked for Revco in Myrtle Beach. That's all I had."

Months passed before Tony decided to satisfy his curiosity — What if the man he met at the nightclub was thinking about him too? He got in his car and drove from Charlotte to Myrtle Beach.

"I went to seventeen Revcos," says Tony. "He wasn't at any of them."

Weeks later, Gary found Tony at the bar where they first met.

"I've been out here the last couple of weeks hoping I'd bump into you," said Gary, who'd been on vacation during Tony's excursion and had since moved to Lake Norman.

"Oh yeah?" said Tony. "That's nothing."

Flash forward to Valentine's Day, 2014.

The kids were in school when Gary and Tony took a day trip from Garner to Wilmington to celebrate their anniversary by touring a foreclosed property presumably built by famed architect James F. Post. They had long discussed the possibility of moving to Wilmington, where Tony grew up visiting his aunt on Country Club Drive.

"When we arrived, our Realtor told us that the house had just gone under contract," says Tony. "A couple from Russia had planned to turn it into a B&B, so we walked through the house and let it go."

Six weeks later they answered an unexpected call.

"Somebody else already had a B&B license on Fifth," says Tony, citing Wilmington's one-per-block rule. "The deal fell through."

Walking through the mansion for the second time, the couple began to see each room filled with their most cherished items: the Duncan Phyfe sofa that belonged to Tony's grandma; Gary's sprawling collection of cut glass; the family piano, which they imagined the kids playing on cool evenings while they listened from the Dock Street veranda; photographs that detail the journey of premature infants who blossom into brilliant teens. Over breakfast at The Dixie Grill, they decided that this was their once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be stewards of a historic home that dazzled them, from the glazed double door entrance to the palatial interior with heart pine flooring and ornate displays of Italianate craftsmanship throughout,

although perhaps culminating with the handcrafted central staircase. The Kirkegaards put their Garner home on the market and, the day it sold, made an offer on the Miles Costin House.

Of course, so did someone else.

"We don't know what their offer was, but we do know that they offered $200,000 cash," says Tony. "When they got the house, we started searching online for a temporary rental."

They were preparing to sign the lease for a historic district house on the 400 block of Orange Street when their Realtor called again.

"You're not going to believe what's happened," said the agent, who proceeded to give them the dirt on how their dream home on South Fifth Avenue was miraculously available once again.

If Gary and Tony were willing to resubmit their offer, the Miles Costin House would be theirs.

They moved in on Labor Day Weekend of 2014 and, after restoring rotted columns and steps on the front porch, began transforming the palatial interior with colors, fixtures and fittings that reflect their taste: "Southern tradition with a twist."

On October 10, during the 2015 Back Door Kitchen Tour organized by the Residents of Old Wilmington (ROW), guests will be able to walk through the main floor, where a central hallway opens to symmetrical double parlors furnished with plantation blinds and estate sale treasures.

"When we first walked through the house, it didn't look anything like this," says Tony. Since it had served as a boarding house, there were doors everywhere.

Nevermore.

In the living room, a built-in bookcase opens to a secret storage space said

to have been used to hide guns and silver during the Civil War.

"We can comfortably seat ten in the dining room," says Tony, gesturing to the circular table by the bay window. The crystal chandelier, complete with medallion, once hung in a New York brownstone.

"It belonged to a friend's grandparents," says Tony. "When they sold the brownstone, she put it in her attic . . ."

Adds Gary: "And there it sat for twenty years."

Back in the kitchen, added-on in the 1970s and tastefully updated by the home's previous owner, red walls and stainless appliances offer contemporary punches, and twin movie set chandeliers hang above the granite island installed by the Kirkegaards.

"The cabinets under the slab came out of the third floor kitchen," says Tony. "This is where we eat and hang out."

Vintage cake stands line an ornate kitchen hutch, the old chopping block Tony built with his father doubles as extra counter space, and above the stove is the chalkboard that hung at Britt's Grille and Grocery, the Bladen County restaurant owned by Tony's grandmother.

"I worked there every summer until I was 13."

Olive green walls create a seamless flow between family room and library, where a portrait and a Southern lady are favorite conversation starters.

"We tell everybody that that's Miles Costin," says Tony of a painting that may have come from a yard sale or junk shop.

As for the Southern lady who appears to be floating above the doorway? That's Miss Dolly, a housewarming gift from neighbors Sarah and Muriel Pearson, whose mother, the real Miss Dolly, lived on the corner of Fifth and

Nun and, on her hundredth birthday, became an official downtown landmark. She died last year at age 102, but her spirit lives on through stories told by friends and neighbors.

On the second floor, which includes two guest rooms and a master suite, Baron (Airedale) and Beau (Morkie) snooze on an antique crib in the sunny sleeping porch. Up one more flight to Austin and Brittney's floor, for which they can thank the Atkinsons, the couple who added the mansard roof.

Tony has many visions for the home and, having put his career as a designer on hold to raise the children, recently launched South Fifth Avenue Designs. By the time the tour rolls around, the dining room walls will be done in eight-inch stripes of gold and cream (to match the heirloom sofa), and the mudroom will be transformed into a fully stocked bar. He'd love to have the home's sixteen fireplaces restored.

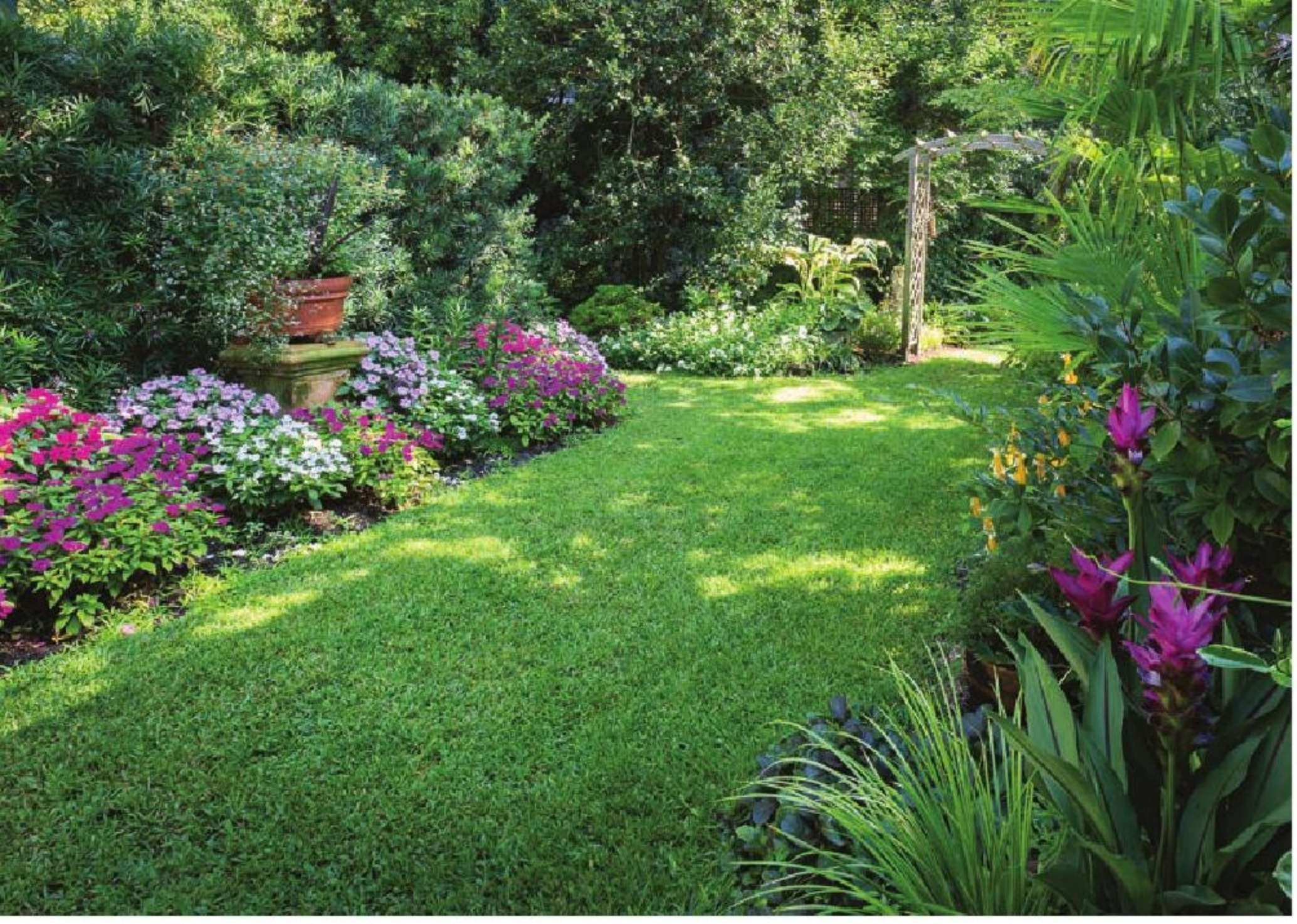
"Too expensive," counters Gary.

But when they get to the heart of it, what they love most about their home is beyond bricks and mortar.

"To be given an opportunity to be a caretaker for this place, even if it's just for ten years," says Gary, "that's the gift."

And for their family to be part of its history.

"We're incredibly blessed," Tony says.



Paradise Found

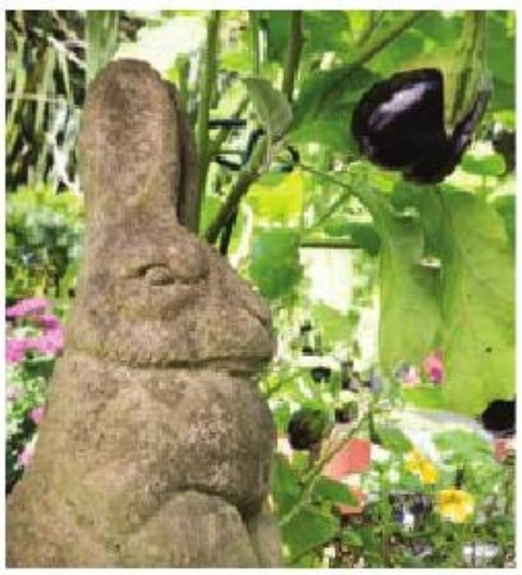
Transplanted gardener extraordinaire Tom Ericson came to his profession the old-fashioned way – by falling in love with plants and sharing his passion with others

By Barbara Sullivan · Photographs by Mark Steelman

That old chestnut "the cobbler's children have no shoes" has a certain ring of truth to it. The idea is that the cobbler is too busy, day and night, crafting shoes for his customers to bother making any for his own kids. It's like the lawyer who never gets around to making a will for herself or the doctor who neglects his own health. We all know people like this. But what would that bit of folk wisdom look like if we were talking about the owner of a garden center?

This is someone who works six days a week in a maze of greenery, surrounded by plants of all sizes and shapes — plants whose names he may know better than some of his own relatives. He unloads them from trucks, fusses over them, waters them, inspects them for tiny pests or suspicious looking spots, coddles them all day long, like the precious living stock they are, and then comes back and does it all over again the next day. After so much stressing over black spot, root rot and spider mites, wouldn't he maybe want to come home to the haven of a plant-free zone? A place where nothing needs watering and no one will die of fusarium wilt? Might he not have the time or energy to tend to his own plants? This hypothetical nursery owner might even consider paving the backyard with asphalt — just for a little peace of mind. "The nurseryman's yard has no plants." Can we coin that?

Well, heck no! That would be wrong on so many levels. The truth is he wants to come home to his own little Garden of Eden. That's the whole point — plants and how very lovable they are. Here, I'm speaking most particularly of Tom Ericson, virtuoso plantsman and owner of the Transplanted Garden in Wilmington. At the end of a day in the hot sun, he comes home, pours himself a drink and wanders around his own private, well-tended garden for an hour or so to unwind. He may pull a few weeds, deadhead a plant here and there, all the while making a mental note of what needs doing. The Caesalpinia tree, with its exotic-looking red flowers and delicate foliage, may have grown so vigorously that now it's shading the satsuma mandarin orange. He'll make a note to move it. He'll check on his Meyer lemon and key lime trees. He may stop and smell the sweet perfume of the white butterfly gingers. Maybe he'll take time to zap some of the annuals with bloom-booster or freshen up some of the dozens of containers he's placed around the yard. The truth is that Tom Ericson puts the lie to



the whole cobbler's-children's-shoe scenario in every possible way.

Like a lot of people who find themselves looking back on a decades-long career in a very specialized industry, Tom isn't sure exactly how he came to be where he is. He didn't set out deliberately to become a plantsman. It just happened bit by bit and eventually took over his life.

There were early influences. His family grew vegetables and roses at home in rural New Jersey. One of his first summer jobs was cutting lawns, which convinced him that lawns, per se, would never be his passion. There was a high school course on landscaping taught by a man who ran a roadside nursery. Then, in college and afterward, he worked for Lexington Gardens, a small nursery chain in Connecticut. He branched out from merely watering and fertilizing the rows of potted plants to rearranging them artistically when things got slow. He never had formal art training, apart from a couple of drafting classes, but he has a natural eye for beauty, proportion and pleasing juxtapositions that lie at the heart of all good design.

It was when he began working full-time for a landscaping enterprise in Southbury, Connecticut, however, that he really began to hone his design sense. The company worked with local clients as well as homeowners in Greenwich, Darien, New Canaan and Stamford, where the estates tended to be large and homeowners often had sizable landscaping budgets. This gave him a thorough grounding in every kind of plant material from trees and shrubs to perennials and annuals, vines, bulbs, grasses — their cultural needs, their growth habits, their strengths and idiosyncrasies as well as how plants work together in the final design scheme. If, as they say, it takes 10,000 hours to master a craft, Tom put in the time and gained the mastery.

At that time, English perennial borders were hot. "I can do an English perennial border in my sleep," he says. Bearded irises were a staple. His boss grew over 500 varieties. From time to time, he had to source unusual or large specimen trees for particular high-end projects, which meant he visited nurseries throughout the East Coast, driving to Massachusetts, New

Jersey, New York — wherever he needed to go to find exactly the right tree for the right spot in a client's garden. He also got the opportunity to design garden displays for the Philadelphia Flower Show two years running — one replicating a French garden visited by Thomas Jefferson, complete with a romantic tower ruin; and the other an exotic landscape centered on a bejeweled Middle-Eastern tent. When the centerpiece Okame cherries failed to cooperate, he cocooned them in plastic bags and blasted them overnight with heat lamps. The result: fat pink blooms in time for opening day. As an insider, he got a ringside seat not only for the black-tie gala but for the post-show drama as well: All the trees and shrubs from the five acres of garden displays were fed into the jaws of a wood chipper.

In the end, it was driving 120–140 miles a day for the landscaping job that got to him. It wasn't just that he was juggling five crews at a time, ordering and laying out hundreds of plants and checking in on existing gardens at a hectic, non-stop pace over a period of some fifteen years. It was the exhaustion of the physical work combined with the driving that brought that stage of his career to a gradual halt. "One of these days I'm going to fall asleep and hit a bridge abutment on the Merritt Parkway," he told himself. And so he started thinking about moving on.

He and his lifelong partner, Allen Sabin, whom he married two years ago, were at that time living in Bethlehem, Connecticut. They decided the next phase of their life would be to open their own nursery business. No more long commutes and no more long winters. They chose Wilmington for its climate and proximity to Tom's parents. They bought the former Carolina Nurseries and were open for business by March 2000. Over their sixteen years of operation as the business has continued to grow, more and more Wilmingtonians have come to rely on Tom's plant expertise and design advice.

Part of the job, he explains, is not selling customers something they dearly want. "I'd rather be honest than sell them something that isn't going to work." For example, he won't sell pampas grass. He puts it to customers this way: Do you really want a plant that will slice into your skin when you brush against it? Do you want a plant that dies back in the middle and becomes a habitat for rats? Do you want to deal with the snakes that move in to feast on the rats? But people often don't listen.

Trying to explain the vagaries of the plant world to his customers can at times be a challenge. A plant like the California lilac (*Ceanothus spp.*), for example, may be listed as doing well in Zone 8. But Pacific Zone 8 is nothing like the steamy, overheated Coastal South with its high nighttime temperatures, scorching summer days and 85-percent humidity. Yes, there are certain lilacs and peonies that will survive here, but it won't be like folks remember it from up North. "I would love to plant an allée of French lilacs," he says. "But where's that going to get me? They'd all be dead by June."

But there are so many wonderful plants that do grow well in the coastal Zone 8 climate, and he has no trouble finding candidates to get enthusiastic about. "I love the plants," he says. "It's always like Christmas when we get new deliveries. And then for a week you keep showing people. Oh my god this is so beautiful." That passion is what keeps him going.

And it just may be that one of the beautiful new arrivals will find its way into Tom and Allen's backyard to keep company with his other treasures, like the fall-blooming sasanquas and Satsuki azaleas. It will become part of this tapestry of color, texture and scent that delights them both in their leisure hours. Sitting on the roof deck, overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway, when the wind is blowing through the stems of Alphonse Karr bamboo sounding just like a waterfall, they can watch the hummingbirds feed and take in the peace that can only come from the sanctuary of a private and well-loved garden.

Barbara Sullivan is the author of Garden Perennials for the Coastal South. *Her downtown Wilmington garden has been featured on the PBS show* Garden Smart.

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ALMANAC

September

By Rosetta Fawley

"The Richmonds are flooded, electricity's gone off. God is testing us and I for one am gonna be prepared. Where's the vodka?"

– *From* September *(1987, Woody Allen)*

Going All Moony

There will be a total lunar eclipse at the end of this month. In North Carolina we'll see it on the night of the 27th and morning of the 28th. The moon will appear red, a nice match for the fall colors. Turn off the lights, put out a lawn chair and sit back for the show. If you get thirsty, reach for a cocktail. Recipes abound for Eclipses and are as diverse as they are prolific. They feature ingredients from sloe gin to mescal. Sloe gin can be tricky to get, so if you want your cocktail to be the appropriate rosy shade you might consider cranberry juice, Campari or grenadine. Probably not all together, though.

The Worm People Cometh

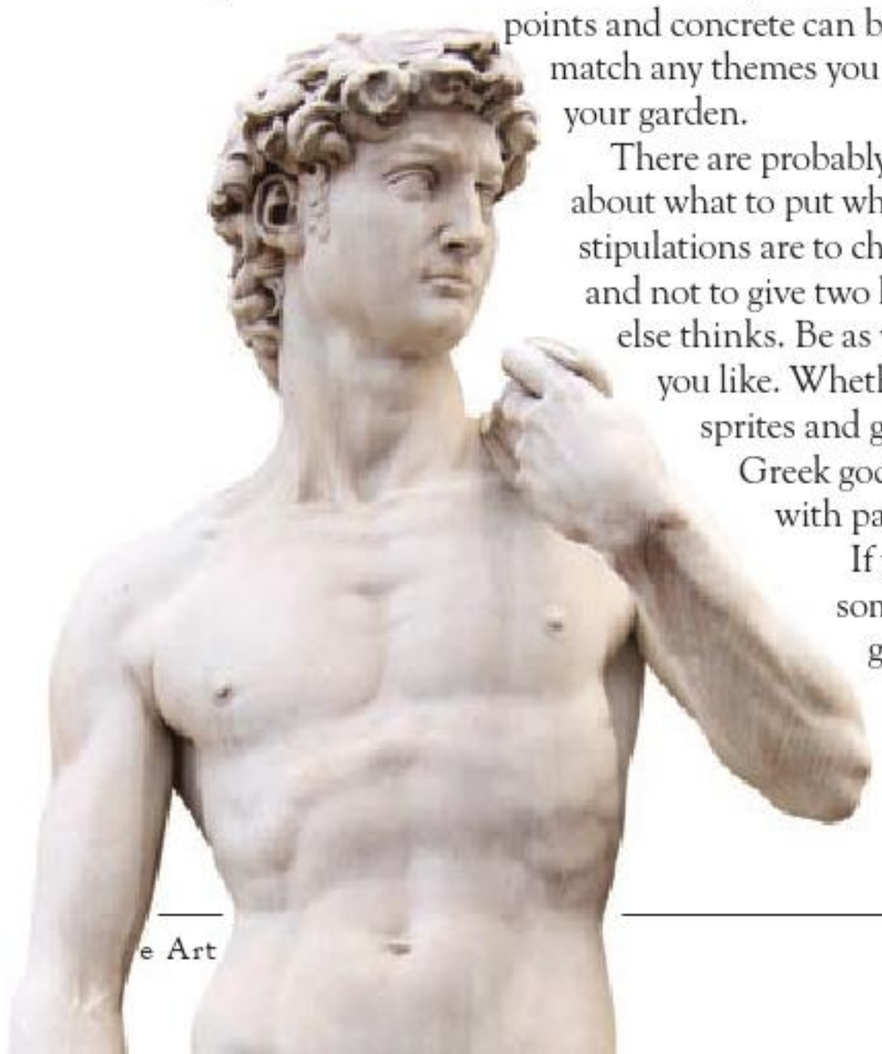
September 23 is the first day of autumn. It is also the anniversary of the Concordat of Worms, which took place in 1122. In fact, this was a papal agreement brokered near the city of Worms in Germany, but the name put the Almanac in mind of the gardener's wriggly friends.

Fall is often a time that people notice their garden's earthworm inhabitants. Those little piles of dirt that poke up through the lawn and beds are called castings, and they're the good sign of an earthworm population. Don't be annoyed that it's messing up the lawn. Castings are far richer in nutrients and organic matter than the surrounding soil. They produce micronutrients, phosphorus, nitrogen and potassium for your plants. In other words, those tiny hillocks of dirt are little mines of nature's very best fertilizer. The wormy wonders also aerate the soil, spread moisture and break down leaves.

Falling leaves are ideal for encouraging an earthworm population. Keep leaf piles moist and as the leaves start to decay the worms will feast on them. As you gather produce from your garden through the autumn, leave the roots to decay so the worms can eat them. No need to worry about live roots because the worms only like decaying material. Furthermore, as you move into winter pruning, leave cut matter on the ground. It may not look very tidy but the earthworms will make short work of it and the mess won't be around for long. If you find smaller, redder worms working above ground, these are composting worms. They're all good for the garden.

Goddesses and Gargoyles

September 8 is the anniversary of the unveiling of Michelangelo's statue of David. The year was 1504. So this might be the month to think about some statuary for your own landscape. Not everyone has access to huge blocks of marble and an artistic genius, but, no matter what your budget or creative connections, garden art can considerably enhance a space. Stone, copper and bronze will all acquire a lovely patina over time. Glass gives a clean, contemporary feel and terra-cotta a Mediterranean warmth – do bear in mind though that terra-cotta is not frost-friendly. Ceramic tiles make pretty talking points and concrete can be dyed different colors to match any themes you may have running through your garden.

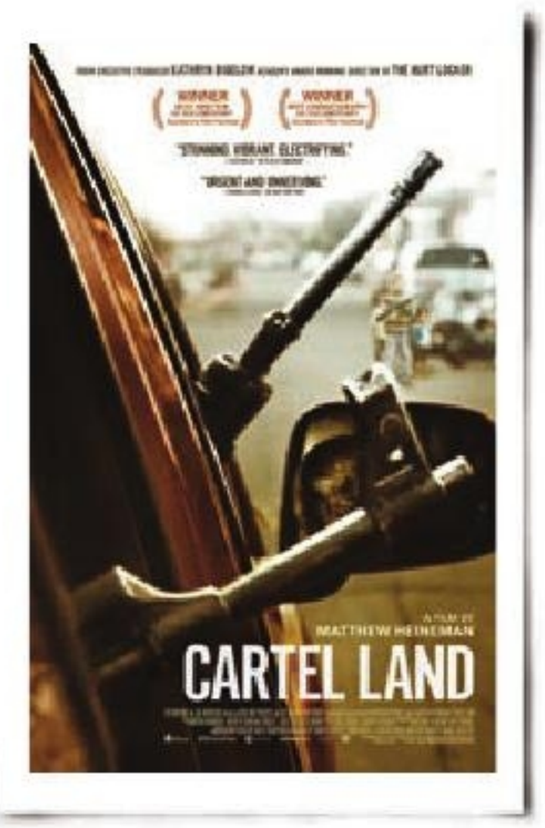


There are probably all sorts of aesthetic rules about what to put where, but the Almanac's only stipulations are to choose something you love and not to give two hoots about what anybody else thinks. Be as whimsical or as classical as you like. Whether you have a passion for sprites and gargoyles or sundials and Greek goddesses, display your taste with panache.

If you fall out of love with something immovable you can grow a climbing rose over it.

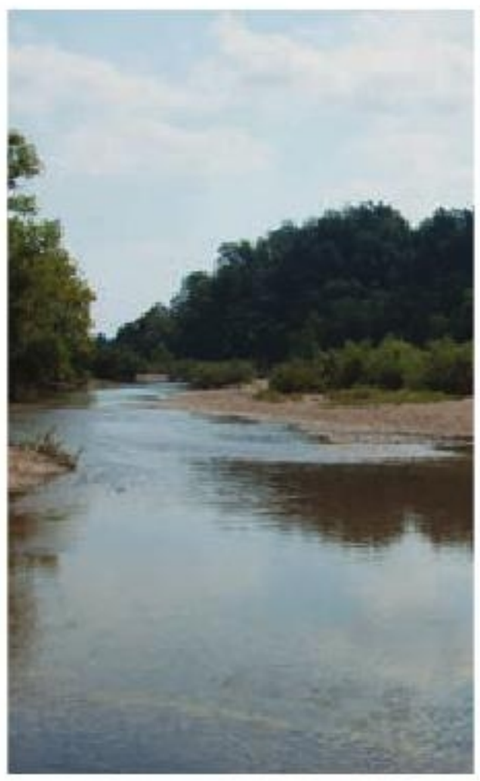
September 2015

Arts Calendar



Cinematique Film

9/1–4



Black River Nature Cruise

9/2

Pooch Plunge

9/8–13

Pier to Pier Swim

9/12

9/2 Black River Nature Cruise
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Black River excursion narrated by coastal ecologist/author Andy Woods. Also held on 9/16 & 9/30. Admission: $40–49.50. Cape Fear Riverboats, 101 South Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1611 or cfrboats.com.

9/2–6 Live Theatre
8 p.m. (Wednesday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Opera House Theatre Company presents *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Also runs 9/11–13. Admission: $31. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.operahousetheatrecompany.net.

9/3 Epicurean Evening
5:30–9 p.m. Culinary extravaganza to benefit Methodist Home for Children. Admission: $125. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 471-6088 or www.wilmingtonee.com.

9/3 Rain Garden Workshop
6–7:30 p.m. Learn how to design and care for a rain garden. Admission: $10 (suggested). Coastal Education Center, 309 West Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.nccoast.org.

9/3 Art Opening Reception
6:30–8:30 p.m. *Art in Motion*, an exhibit by Raffaele Paglia. Artful Living Group, 112 Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-7822 or www.artfullivinggroup.com.

9/4 Coastal Birding Cruise
10 a.m. Board the *Shamrock* for a one-hour tour with Captain Joey Abbate. Admission: $25–35. Blockade Runner Beach Resort Dock, 275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 509-2838 or www.nccoast.org.

9/4 Airlie Concert
6–8 p.m. The Other Guys (Americana and electroacoustic). Food and wine available for purchase. Admission: $2–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

9/4 Downtown Sundown
6–10 p.m. Live music by Journey tribute band Departure. Free. Riverfront Park, North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-7349 or www.wilmingtondowntown.com.

9/4 Boardwalk Blast Music
6:30–9:30 p.m. The Drew Smith Band performs country hits. Free. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

9/4 & 5 Dinner Theater
7 p.m. *Joni and JT in Jail*, a musical exploring the 1960s folk music scene. Admission: $18–32. TheatreNOW, 19 South Tenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-3669 or www.theatrewilmington.com.

9/5 Women of Hope 5K
8 a.m. 5K and 1-mile run with wheelchair and stroller-friendly course. Admission: $15–35. Proceeds benefit Women of Hope. TrySports, Mayfaire Town Center, 925 Town Center Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 232-7532 or its-go-time.com/women-of-hope-5k.

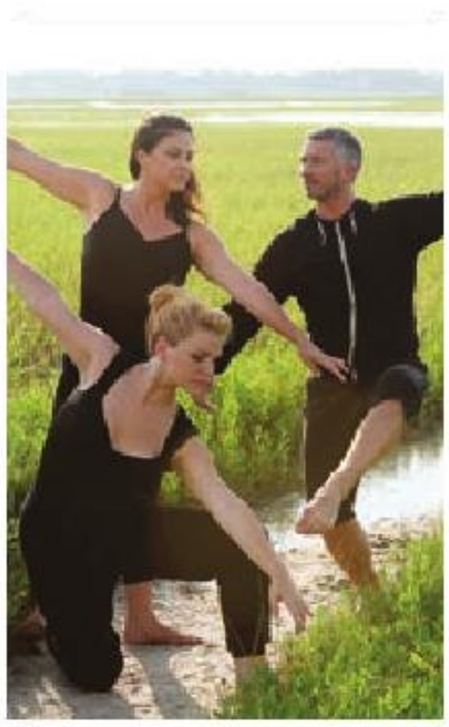
9/6 Go Jump in the Lake 10K
8:30 a.m. 10K, 5K and 1.5-mile fun run to benefit the New Hope Clinic. Run and jump in the lake at the finish line. Admission: $15–35. Spring Lake Park, Pine Road, Boiling Spring Lakes. Info: (910) 232-7532 or its-go-time.com/go-jump-in-the-lake.

9/6 Boogie in the Park
5–7 p.m. Live music by Seneca Guns ('90s rock & dance). Bring blankets and snacks. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

9/6 Greenfield Lake Concert
6:30 p.m. G Love and Special Sauce (alternative hip-hop). Admission: $25–30. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

9/6 Movies at the Lake
8:45 p.m. Free outdoor movie screening of *Cinderella* (2015, PG). Popcorn, soda and candy available for purchase. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Highway 421 and Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-8434 or www.pleasureislandnc.org.

9/7 Word Weavers
7–9 p.m. Christian writers group meeting.

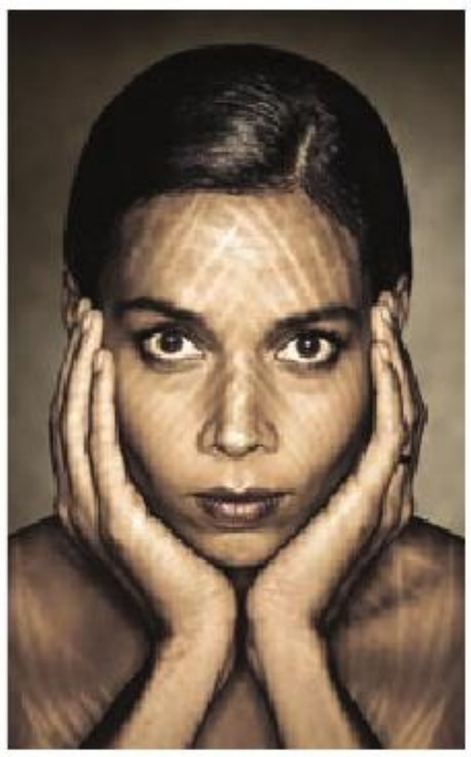


Arts in Motion

9/17&18

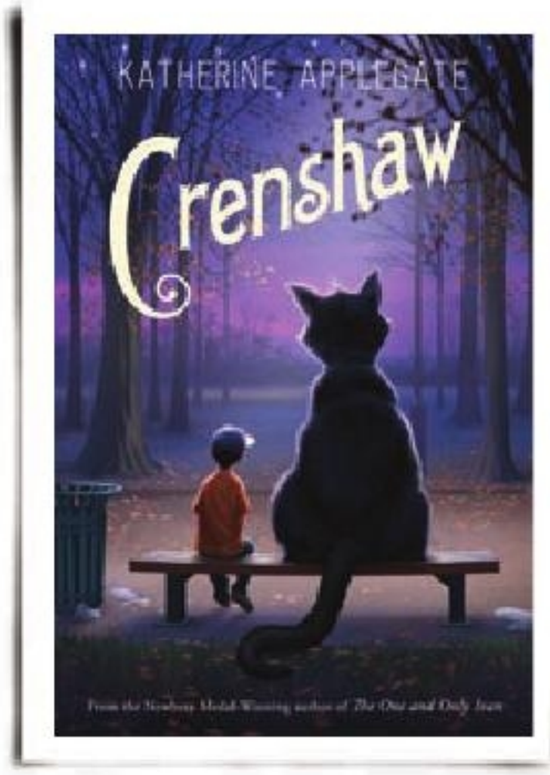
Legends of Tennis

9/18&19



Rhiannon Giddens in Concert

9/28



Author to the Bookshop

10/1

Life Point Church, 3534 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 619-7344 or sondradron@bellsouth.net.

9/8–13 Pooch Plunge
4–8 p.m. (Tuesday – Friday); 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Saturday); 12–4 p.m. (Sunday). Canines cool off at the pool. Admission: $5. Legion Pool, 2131 Carolina Beach Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3682.

9/9 Coastal Speaker Series
7–8:30 p.m. Join Rob Lamme for a fun and informative look at pressing conservation issues. Admission: $10 (suggested). Coastal Education Center, 309 West Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.nccoast.org.

9/9 Senior Dance Classes Begin
Discover the joy and health benefits of ballroom dancing. Call for schedule and registration. New Hanover County Senior Resource Center, 2222 South College Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 799-2001.

9/10 Songs at Sunset
5–9 p.m. Live music plus wine or beer. Ted's Fun on the River, 2 Castle Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 231-5871 or www.tedsfun.com.

9/10 Race for Preservation
6:30 p.m. 5K and 1-mile run through downtown Wilmington with afterparty. Admission: $22–32. Proceeds benefit the Historic Wilmington Foundation. Coastline Convention Center, 503 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-2511 or www.historicwilmington.org.

9/10 Jazz at the Mansion
6:30–8:30 p.m. Live music by Darryl Murrill and Jazzpel. Beer and wine cash bar available. Admission: $5–12. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

9/11 Ricky Skaggs in Concert
7:30 p.m. Bluegrass legend and mandolin master Ricky Skaggs, 14-time Grammy Award winner. Kenan Auditorium, UNCW, 515 Wagoner Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or uncw.edu/presents.

9/11 & 12 Fall Plant Sale
9 a.m. – 6 p.m. The Hobby Greenhouse Club's Fall Plant Sale benefits local horticulture students. Forest Hills Hobby Greenhouse, 2318 Metts Avenue, Wilmington. Info: (910) 319-7588 or www.hobbygreenhouseclub.org.

9/11 & 12 Inshore Challenge
3–8 p.m. (Friday); 7 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Saturday). Premiere inshore tournament in the heart of North Carolina flounder and red drum territory. Awards and afterparty to follow. Admission: $125–150. Inlet Watch Marina, 801 Paoli Court, Wilmington. Info: (910) 409-8379 or fishermanspost.com/tournaments/cbic.

9/11–13 Live Theatre
7:30 p.m. Dram Tree Shakespeare presents *Macbeth*. Admission: $15–25. McEachern's Warehouse, 121 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (800) 838-3006 or www.dramtreeshakes.org.

9/12 Pier to Pier Swim
9 a.m. Two-mile swim competition from Jonnie Mercer's Pier and the Crystal Pier. Admission: $40–55. Johnnie Mercer's Pier, 23 East Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: www.pier-2-pier.com.

9/12 Bird Program
9:15–10:30 a.m. Dr. Jamie Rotenberg on painted buntings. Free. Temptations Everyday Gourmet, 3501 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-6001 or www.wildbirdgarden-inc.com.

9/12 Family Science Saturday
10 a.m. – 1 p.m. *Ocean Adventures*: Discover why the estuary is called the "ocean's nursery", examine local shells and view sea life up close. Admission: $5–8. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4362 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

9/12 Farm to Fork Gala
6:30–10 p.m. One Less Hungry Child Farm to Fork Gala is a fall-inspired gastronomic experience catered by local chef Mark Milner with live music by the Jesse Stockton Band and silent auction. Admission: $100–125. Proceeds benefit Nourish NC. Windell Hall, Union Station, 502 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 465-0995 or nourishnc.org/gala.

9/12 Greenfield Lake Concert
7 p.m. Trombone Shorty and Orleans

Avenue perform with New Breed Grass Band. Admission: $27–32. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

9/12 & 13 New Home Show
1–5 p.m. (Saturday); 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Sunday). The Coastal Lifestyles New Home Show features the area's top home and lifestyle vendors. Schwartz Center, CFCC, 601 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 799-2611 or www.wilmingtoncoastallifestylesexpo.com.

9/17 She Rocks Luncheon
11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Fundraiser/luncheon to raise awareness and funds for ovarian cancer research. Keynote speakers include Miss USA 2009 and representatives from the UNC Lineberger Cancer Center, New Hanover Regional Medical Center and Zimmer Cancer Center. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 62003953 or she-rocks.org/events.

9/17 Fashion Show
6:30 p.m. Annual fashion show hosted by Love is Bald. Admission: $20–25. Proceeds benefit Women of Hope. Bakery 105, 105 Orange Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 264-6097 or loveisbald.org.

9/17 & 18 Arts in Motion
8 p.m. (Thursday); 1 p.m. & 8 p.m. (Friday). Collaborative arts event featuring music, film, visual arts, and modern, contemporary and jazz dance from choreographer Tracey Varga and Forward Motion Dance Company. Admission: $17.50–20. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 793-6675 or www.forwardmotiondance.org.

9/18 Airlie Concert
6–8 p.m. The Imitations (Motown and beach favorites). Food and wine available for purchase. Admission: $2–9. Airlie Gardens, 300 Airlie Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-7700 or www.airliegardens.org.

9/18 & 19 Legends of Tennis
5:30–8 p.m. (Friday); 9:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. (Saturday). Charity tennis exhibition featuring celebrities James Blake, Rennae Stubbs, Jimmy Arias, Bobby Reynolds and Mikael Pernfors. General Admission: $25; Grand Slam Party: $100. Proceeds benefit the Landfall Foundation and the UNCW Seahawk Club. Country Club of Landfall, Drysdale Sports center complex, 1750 Drysdale Drive, Wilmington. Info: landfalllegends.com.

9/18 & 19 Boat Regatta & Festival
5 p.m. (Friday); 8:30 a.m. (Saturday). Dragon boat regatta and festival. Free. Proceeds benefit Step Up for Soldiers. Carolina Beach Yacht Basin & Marina, 216 Canal Drive, Carolina Beach. Info: (919) 259-4663 or www.carolinabeachdragonboat.com.

9/18–20 Seaglass Salvage Market
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Friday & Saturday); 12–5 p.m. (Sunday). Indoor/outdoor eclectic market featuring up-cycled and repurposed goods. Located at 1987 Andrew Jackson Highway, Leland. Info: www.seaglasssalvagemarket.com.

9/18–20 Fall Home Show
11 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Friday); 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. (Saturday); 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Sunday). Fall show designed for homeowners in all stages of remodeling, landscaping and decorating. Free. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (855) 523-5310 or www.wilmingtonhomeshow.com.

9/19 YMCA Triathlon
7 a.m. Triathlon featuring a 1500-meter swim, 12-mile bike ride and 5k run. Admission: $50–145. Proceeds benefit the Wilmington YMCA. 321 Causeway Drive, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 251-9622 or www.setupevents.com.

9/19 Boat Safety Class
8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Comprehensive intro boating course which satisfies the N.C. safe boating education requirement for anyone under 26 years of age. Local knowledge class on 9/26 followed by an on-the-water course on 9/27. Admission: $70. Cape Fear Community College, 411 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: www.capefearboatingcourse.org.

9/19 Oakdale Walking Tour
10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Tour North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery with local historian Michael Whaley. Admission: $10. Oakdale Cemetery, 520 North Fifteenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-5682 or oakdalecemetery.org.

9/19 Volleyball Tournament
11 a.m. Annual tournament featuring 4-person co-ed teams, silent auction, raffles, bounce houses and face painting. Admission: $100–125. Proceeds benefit Women of Hope. Capt'n Bills Backyard Grill, 4240 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 762-0173 or loveisbald.org.

9/19 Greenfield Lake Concert
6 p.m. Karl Denson's Tiny Universe. Admission: $20–25. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

9/19 & 20 NC Shell Show
9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Saturday); 1–5 p.m. (Sunday). Hundreds of seashells collected by NC Shell Club members. Admission: $5–8. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4362 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

9/19 & 20 Fall Festival & Corn Maze

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1–11 p.m. (Saturday); 1–6 p.m. (Sunday). Highlights include a North Carolina-shaped corn maze, hay rides, farm animals, human foosball, laser tag, a barrel train and live entertainment. Hubb's Corn Maze, 10444 US Highway 421 North, Clinton. Info: (910) 564-6709 or www.hubbscornmaze.com.

9/20 Anniversary Celebration
2–4 p.m. Celebrate 30 years of serving the hungry and the friends and volunteers of Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Bring one non-perishable food item. Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, 315 Red Cross Street, Wilmington. Info: (484) 885-3037 or www.motherhubbardsnc.com.

9/20 Boogie in the Park
5–7 p.m. South of K (acoustic bluegrass). Bring blankets and snacks. Free. Ocean Front Park, 105 Atlantic Avenue, Kure Beach. Info: (910) 458-8216 or www.townofkurebeach.org.

9/21 History Lecture
7:30 p.m. Historian John Mosley on the role of Fort Fisher during World War II. Free. Federal Point History Center, 1121 A North Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-0502 or www.federalpointhistory.org.

9/22 Country Concert
7:30 p.m. The Malpass Brothers. Admission: $10–29. Odell Williamson Auditorium, Brunswick Community College, 50 College Road NW, Bolivia. Info: (910) 755-7416 or www.bccowa.com.

9/22 A Taste of the Town
6 p.m. Culinary tasting tour of downtown's best restaurants. Awards for best appetizer, best entrée, and best overall. Tour starts at Thalian Hall; complimentary trolley rides available. Admission: $45.. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

9/24 Park Opening
5–7:30 p.m. Opening celebration for Wilmington's newest green space. Admission: $25–30. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4362 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

9/24 Bluegrass Concert
5:30 p.m. Greensky Bluegrass. Admission: $17–22. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-3614 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

9/24–27 Live Theatre
7:30 p.m. (Thursday – Saturday); 3 p.m. (Sunday). Thalian Association presents *The Addams Family*, a macabre musical comedy. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

9/25 Art Opening
6–9 p.m. Opening reception for *Fifth Element .2*, works by nine artists celebrating the discovery that we are all connected and that anything is possible. Free. Acme Art Studios, 711 North Fifth Avenue, Wilmington. Info: (910) 512-6251 or acme-art-studios.com.

9/25 Fourth Friday
6–9 p.m. Downtown galleries, studios and art spaces open their doors to the public in an after-hours celebration of art and culture. Various venues in Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-0998 or www.artscouncilofwilmington.org.

9/25–27 NC Spot Festival
7–10 p.m. (Friday); 9 a.m. – 10:30 p.m. (Saturday); 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. (Sunday). Includes food, arts and craft vendors, music, fireworks, gem mining, pony and camel rides, inflatables, pageant, 5k and more. Live entertainment by Jim Quick and Coastline, The Carolina Band, and The Embers featuring Craig Woolard. Admission: $3. 14221 US Highway 17, Hampstead. Info: www.ncspotfestival.com.

9/26 Maze Craze 5K
8 a.m. Inaugural race at Galloway Farm. Admission: $10–30. Galloway Farm, 372 Artesia Road, Hallsboro. Info: (910) 232-7532 or www.ncmazecraze.com.

9/26 Battleship Alive
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Living history event that lets participants interact with World War II re-enactors. Admission: $6–14. Battleship NC, 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5797 or www.battleshipnc.com.

9/26 Intercultural Festival
10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Includes music, dance, food, arts and crafts, costumes, literature and more. Odell Williamson Auditorium, BCC, 50 College Road, Supply. Info: (910) 842-6566 or www.bcifestival.org.

9/26 Wine & Beer Walk
1–6 p.m. Self-guided tasting tour of downtown restaurants and drinking establishments. Start at Ziggy's By the Sea; two samples per venue. Admission: $15. Info: (216) 374-8884 or wineandbeerwalk.com.

9/26 CARE Project Gala
6–10 p.m. Celebrate the art of hearing. Six chef stations, open bar, live music by the Jack Jack 180 Band, silent and live auctions and special guest host. Tickets: $75. Union Station, 502 North Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (919) 606-4651 or www.thecareproject.com.

9/26 Flavor of NC
6:30–10 p.m. Experience three culinary regions of NC — mountains, Piedmont and coast. Admission: $75. Proceeds benefit the Good Shepherd Center. St. James Parish, 25 South Third Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 763-4424 or goodshepherdwilmington.org.

9/26 Symphony Orchestra Concert
7:30 p.m. The Wilmington Symphony Orchestra's season opener: Bach's *Symphony in D* and Brahm's *Symphony No. 1*. Admission: $6–27. Kenan Auditorium, UNCW, 515 Wagoner Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 962-3500 or www.wilmingtonsymphony.org.

9/26 Live Music
8–11 p.m. Port City Americana/roots group Stray Local. Ironclad Brewery, 115 North Second Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 769-0290 or www.ironcladbrewery.com.

9/27 Family Fun Day
1–5 p.m. Includes tours, storytellers, games, pony rides, petting zoo, live music, face painting, balloon animals, costumed re-enactors and more. Rain date is 10/4. Free. Bellamy Mansion, 503 Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-3700 or www.bellamymansion.org.

9/27 Alzheimer's Gala
6–10 p.m. Fundraiser/celebration to raise awareness and funds for Alzheimer's research. Includes cocktails, dinner, silent auction and live music Admission: $125/person; $200/couple. Wilmington Convention Center, 515 Nutt Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-5101 or www.ncalzgala.com.

9/27 Chamber Music Concert
7:30 p.m. The Israeli Arial Quartet performs Schubert's *Quarttsatz* and a piece from Beethoven's late period, the *A Minor Quartet, Op. 132*. Admission: $15–30. Beckwith Recital Hall, UNCW, 5270 Randall Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 343-1079 or www.chambermusicwilmington.org.

9/28 Live Music
6–10 p.m. Lead singer, violinist, banjo player and founding member of the Grammy-winning band Carolina Chocolate Drops, Rhiannon Giddens performs live at Brooklyn Arts Center. Admission: $30–40. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 North Fourth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-2939 or www.brooklynartsnc.com.

9/29 Book Talk
6:30 p.m. Author Mary Flinn of Summerfield speaks about her newest novel, *A Girl Like That*. Free. Northeast Regional Library, 1241 Military Cutoff Road, Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-6323 or www.nhclibrary.org.

10/1 Author to the Bookshop.
Katherine Applegate, Newbery winning author of *The One and Only Ivan* will make her only North Carolina appearance in Southern Pines to present her new book *Crenshaw*. The story follows a young boy whose family has fallen on hard times, so creates an imaginary friend in the form of a giant cat, that helps him deal with many of the challenges he faces. Ages 7 and up. Tickets limited, and available with purchase of *Crenshaw* from The Country Bookshop. Info/tickets: (910) 692-3211.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Monday Farmers' Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside beach market offering a variety of fresh, locally grown produce and more. Open through 9/28. Municipal Grounds, Seawater Lane, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

Monday – Wednesday Cinematique
7 p.m. Independent, classic and foreign films screened in historic Thalian Hall. 9/1–4: *Cartel Land*; 9/7–9: *Mr. Holmes*. Check online for updated listings and special screenings. Admission: $7. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut Street, Wilmington. Info/Tickets: (910) 632-2285 or www.thalianhall.org.

Tuesday Wine Tasting
6–8 p.m. Free wine tasting hosted by a wine professional plus wine and small plate specials all night. The Fortunate Glass, 29 South Front Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4292 or www.fortunateglasswinebar.com.

Tuesday Cape Fear Blues Jam
8 p.m. A unique gathering of the area's finest Blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join the fun. No cover charge. The Rusty Nail, 1310 South Fifth Avenue. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Wednesday Farmers Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Open-air market on the front lawn. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 North, Wilmington. Info: (910) 686-9518 or www.poplargrove.org/farmers-market.

Wednesday T'ai Chi at CAM
12–1 p.m. Qigong (Practicing the Breath of Life) with Martha Gregory. Open to beginner and experienced participants. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Wednesday & Friday Beachside Music
6–9 p.m. Live music on the pier. 9/2: Mike Frusia; 9/4: Selah Dubb; 9/9: Rob Ronner; 9/11: Mykel Barbee; 9/16: Brennan Simmons; 9/18: Tony Barnes; 9/23: Mike Frusia; 9/25: Rob Ronner; 9/30: Mike Frusia. Oceanic, 703 South Lumina Avenue, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-5551 or oceanicrestaurant.com.

Thursday Yoga at the CAM
12–1 p.m. Open to all levels. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 South Seventeenth Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Saturday Farmers Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Outdoor "island-style" market featuring live music and local growers, producers and artisans. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Highway 421 & Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 431-8122 or www.carolinabeachfarmersmarket.com.

Saturday Riverfront Farmers Market
8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside market featuring local farmers, producers, artists, crafters and live music. Riverfront Park, North Water Street, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-6223 or www.wilmingtondowntown.com/events/farmers-market.

Sunday Waterfront Music
4–7 p.m. Summer concerts on the waterfront patio. 9/6: Back of the Boat (yacht rock); 9/13: Selah Dubb (reggae); 9/20: Overtyme (classic rock & beach); 9/27: Mark Roberts (Motown & classic rock). Bluewater Waterfront Grill, 4 Marina Street, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-8500 or www.bluewaterdining.com.

To add a calendar event, please contact Ashley at ashley@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted the first of the month, one month prior to the event.

The Children's Museum of Wilmington
YachtVenture
2015
Saturday October 17, 2015
6:00 pm
MarineMax Wrightsville Beach
Stroll the docks . . .explore . . .wine and dine . . .imagine.
www.YachtVenture.org | (910) 254-3534 | www.PlayWilmington.org

Guardians of the Garden
Sculpture Exhibit
June 15 - October 25
By Dumay Gorham III
*kids can participate in a scavenger hunt to win a prize
Exhibit sponsored by
SMR Southern Metals Recycling, Inc.
Landfall Foundation
Together in Community Giving
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Gardens
Foundation
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Friday, October 16
to benefit Environmental Education
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Bellamy Mansion
Museum of History & Design Arts

Join us for a FREE Family Fun Day!

Sunday, September 27th • 1-5pm

Childrens Tours of Bellamy Mansion • Story Tellers • Games
Pony Rides • Petting Zoo • Live Music • Face Painting
Balloon Animals • Costumed Reenactors and More!

Rain Date, Sunday, October 4th

503 Market Street, Wilmington // 910.251.3700

www.bellamymansion.org

WILMINGTON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CLASSIC Symphonies

2015-16 Masterworks Season

Premier Season Sponsor
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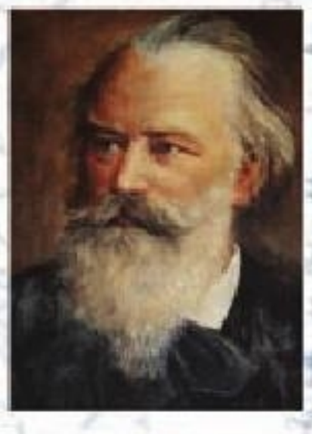
BRAHMS 1

September 26, 2015 | 7:30 pm
Kenan Auditorium

Sponsored by Wilmington Gastroenterology Associates



C.P.E. Bach | *Symphony in D*
Mendelssohn | *Calm Seas and Prosperous Voyage*
Johannes Brahms | *Symphony No. 1*

TICKETS *by phone* 910-962-3500
or online www.WilmingtonSymphony.org

Quarter Moon Books Presents

SEPTEMBER 26, 2015
NOON LUNCHEON WITH LISA WINGATE
SURF CITY WELCOME CENTER
CATERED BY DADDY MAC'S BEACH GRILLE
TICKETS AT QUARTER MOON BOOKS

Award-winning author, Lisa Wingate sheds new light on the WPA folklore writers, who documented thousands of personal histories of a hidden America. Wingate will discuss her novel, *The Sea Keeper's Daughters,* and share insights for others wishing to share their family stories.

Quarter Moon

Wine Tastings Wednesdays 6:00 - 8:00 pm
Story Time Thursdays at 10:00 am
Live Music Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays 8:00 - 11:00 pm

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Wilmington Art Association

The Premier Visual Arts Organization of the Cape Fear Coast

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Monthly Member Meetings (2nd Thurs of month) and Socials
Field Trips, Paint-Outs, Lectures and Demonstrations

YOU ARE INVITED
Art in the Arboretum Oct 2 - 4, 2015
This favorite annual fall event, fills the gardens with art and music for a weekend! New Hanover County Arboretum.

Joy Peterson

Amber Whittington

Brad Carter

Membership is open to artists & art lovers alike

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www.wilmingtonart.org

Fall Session 2015
Brightmore UNIVERSITY SERIES
A Diverse Program for Lifestyle Enrichment

SEPTEMBER

"Cooking Creations with The Cookbook Authors"
Presented by: Ryan McKoy, Executive Chef/Campus Food Services Director and Life Enrichment Directors, Brightmore of Wilmington
Wednesday, September 16th, 2015 at 2 p.m.
The Kempton at Brightmore Assisted Living
In celebration of National Cooking Month, submit your special recipe and beloved story surrounding your recipe to us by September 11th. Then, join us for story-telling, recipe sharing and tastings on September 16th. All recipes and stories will be included in our "Cooking Creations Cookbook," but just one recipe and story will be selected as our "Featured Recipe and Story." Copies of the cookbook will be available at our November 6th Fall Festival Fundraiser for Alzheimer's. **RSVP by Monday, September 14th, 2015.**

"Creating Your Own Bucket List;" Fill Your Dance Card!
Presented by Christine Parker, Writer, Educator, Certified Humorist
Tuesday, September 22nd , 2015 at 2 p.m.
Brightmore Independent Living
Join Christine and learn how to create your very own bucket list by mentally leapfrogging from spiritual doodling to inspiring a stream of consciousness and connecting with your inner spirit! This allows you to determine all the things you'd like to do, but haven't. The clock is ticking, so let's get started in making your dreams reality! **RSVP by Friday, September 18th, 2015.**

"Remembering Wrightsville, 1925: Moonlight Over Wrightsville Beach"
Presented by Madeline Flagler, Executive Director Wrightsville Beach Museum of History
Tuesday, September 29, 2015 at 2 p.m.
Brightmore Independent Living
Join us for a delightful and nostalgic journey back to Wrightsville Beach, NC in the year 1925 when it was known as "The Fun Spot of the South". Learn about or revisit memories of the beach during this era of the trolley, the beautiful Oceanic Hotel, and "live" Big Band music, dancing, oceanfront movies on the big screen, and all sorts of other fun at The Lumina Pavilion. **RSVP by Monday, September 28th, 2015.**

OCTOBER

"Making the Rest of Our Lives, The Best of Our Lives"
Presented by Martin Case, JD, QMHP, GCM
Monday, October 5th, 2015 at 2 p.m.
The Commons at Brightmore Personal & Memory Care
Join us for a presentation and discussion on how little things we can do today, can impact our quality of life for the rest of our lives. Learn how the far-reaching impact of simple changes in our daily life can help preserve not only our physical, but our cognitive health as we age. **RSVP by Friday, October 2nd, 2015.**

NOVEMBER

"Fall Festival Fundraiser for Alzheimers"
Friday, November 6th, 2015
Brightmore of Wilmington Campus Fountain & Pond
Mark your calendars and join us for our 7th Annual Commemoration of Alzheimer's Awareness Month. Come and enjoy "Gemutlichkeit --- Good Cheer and The Best of the Best of Times" at our Octoberfest featuring, the Harbour Town Fest Band, a 15- piece authentic brass fest band who come ready to have more fun than you! You'll enjoy German-styled fall foods, beverages, music, dancing, prizes, raffles, and more! Tickets, available that day, may be used for food & festivities including opportunities to win over 100 Raffle Items donated by area businesses and on display. All proceeds benefit Alzheimer's North Carolina and support local families. **RSVP by Monday, November 2nd, 2015.**

Reserve your seat for these FREE events by calling 910.350.1980.

Brightmore of Wilmington
2324 South 41st Street, Wilmington | 910.350.1980
www.brightmoreofwilmington.com

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*Monday through Friday, subject to available stock.

Port City People

Cape Fear Blues Cruise

On the Henrietta III Riverboat

Friday, July 24, 2015

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

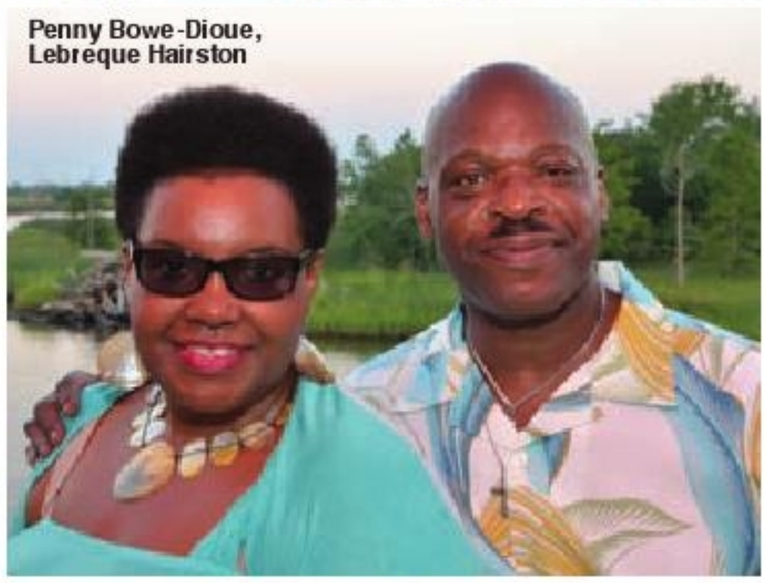
George & Gwen Shafer, Meg & Jaret Sears

Kory & Alia Grant, Nikki & James Gift

Ron Dye, Fern Bugg

Jennifer Dauphinais, C.J. Yates

Colette & Larry Myers, Lan Nichols



Penny Bowe-Dioue, Lebreque Hairston

Jim & Susan Beam

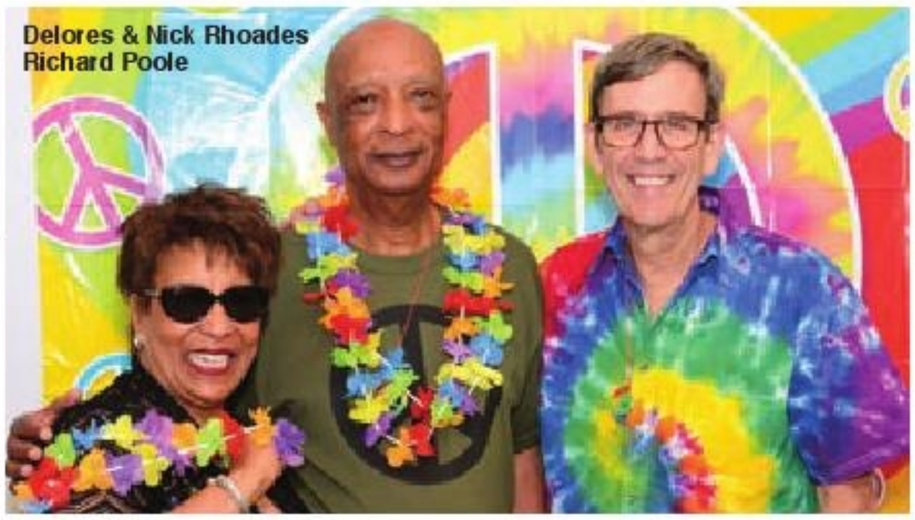
Dolores & Tony Reese

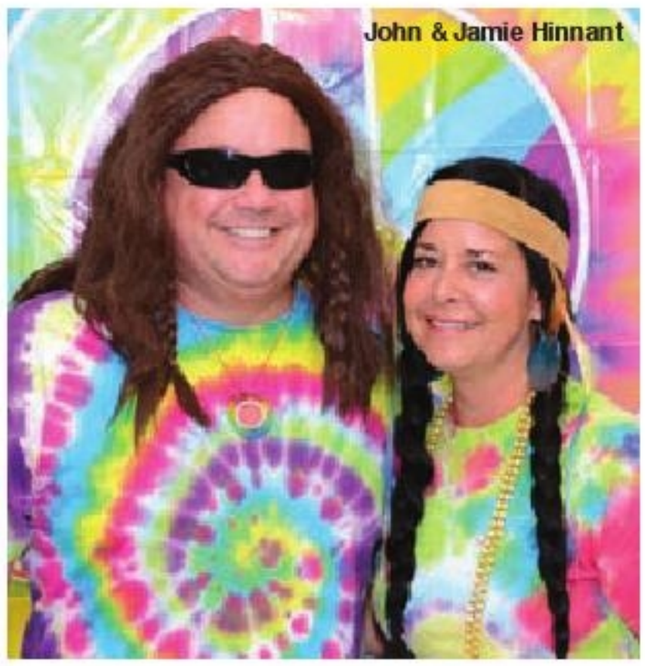
Randy McQuay II

Port City People

4th Annual Kids Making It Hippie Ball
UNCW Warwick Center
Saturday, July 25, 2015
Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Libby & Maureen Beccarino

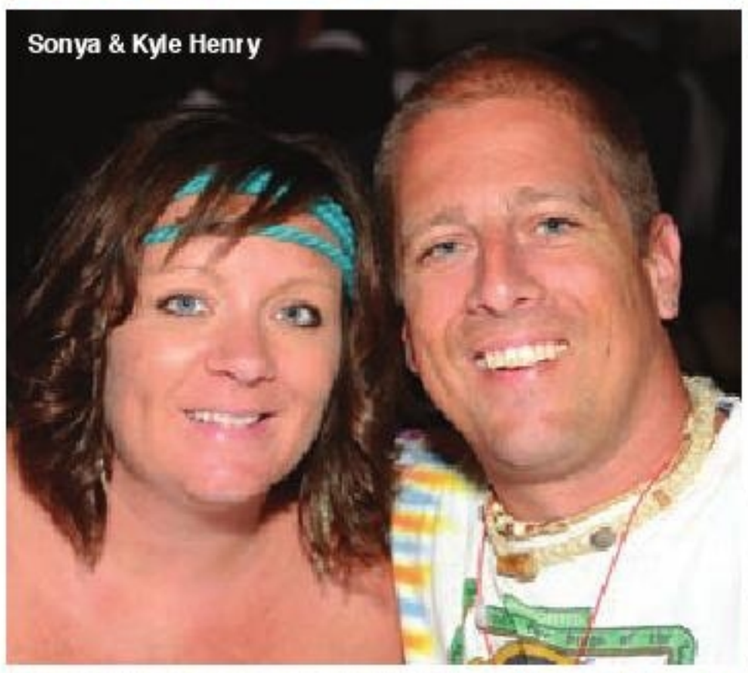

Delores & Nick Rhoades
Richard Poole


John & Jamie Hinnant

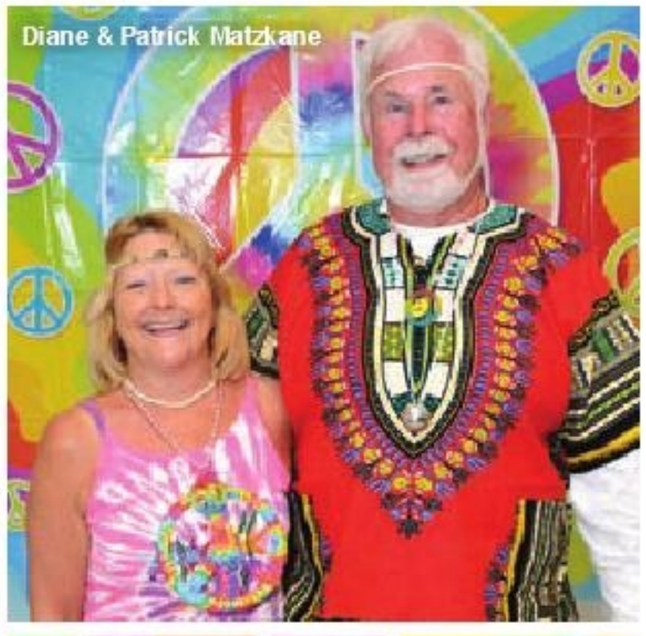
Clarke Pritts & Susan Sims

Kevin & Tiffany Harger

Bert Linton, Bethany Turner, David Herve


Sonya & Kyle Henry

Lorrie Gregory,
Carol McLaughlin,
Bill Hylwa


Diane & Patrick Matzkane

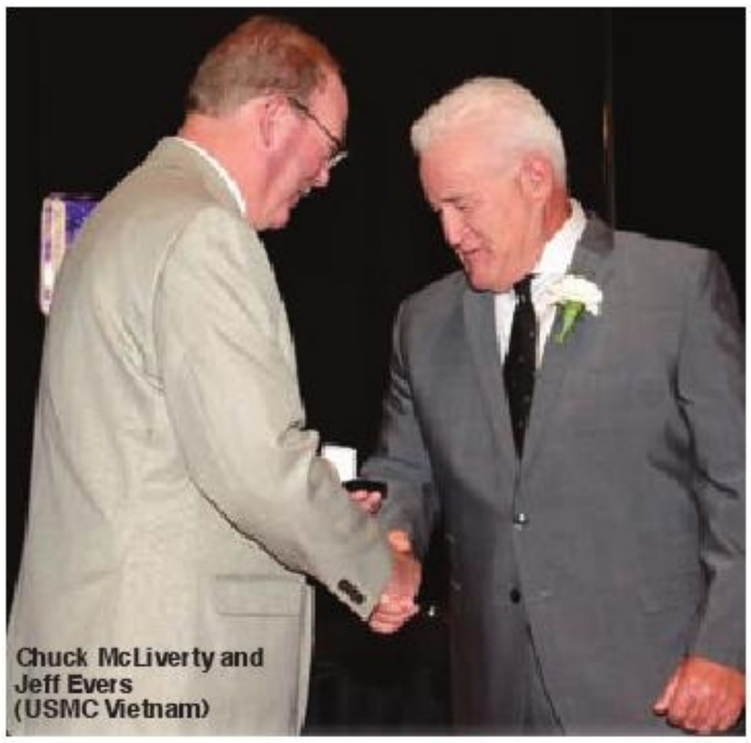
Dave & Deb Buchanan

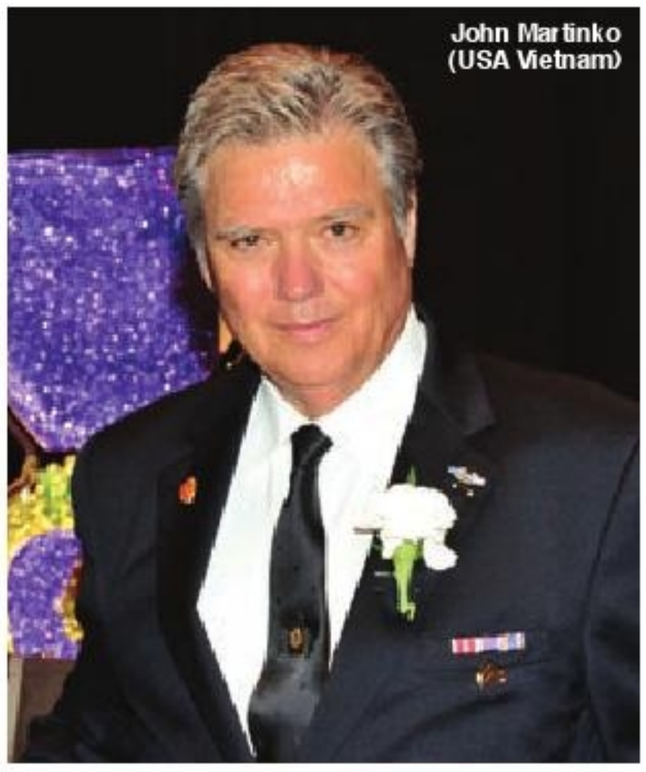
Kimberly Boyce,
Tom Cox,
Kira Van Sickle,
Pedrina Salinas

Rebecca & Bob Philpott

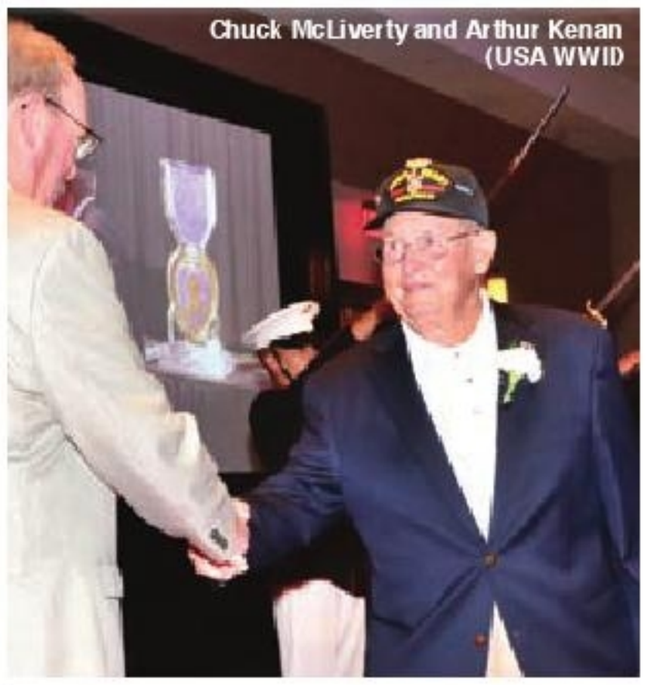
Port City People

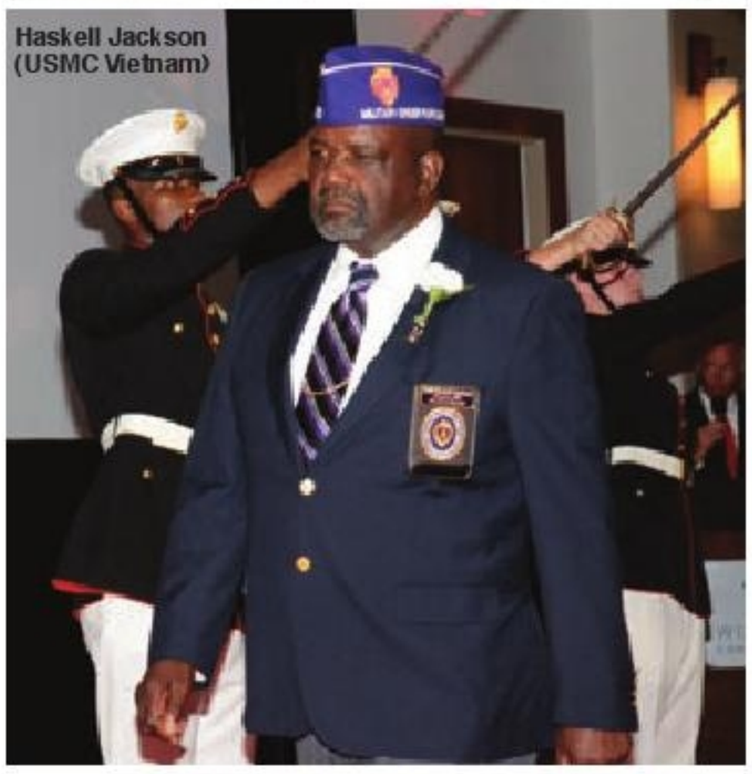
Cape Fear Purple Heart Recipients
Walk of Honor
Sunday, August 2, 2014
Photographs by Bill Ritenour


Chuck McLiverty and Jeff Evers (USMC Vietnam)


John Martinko (USA Vietnam)

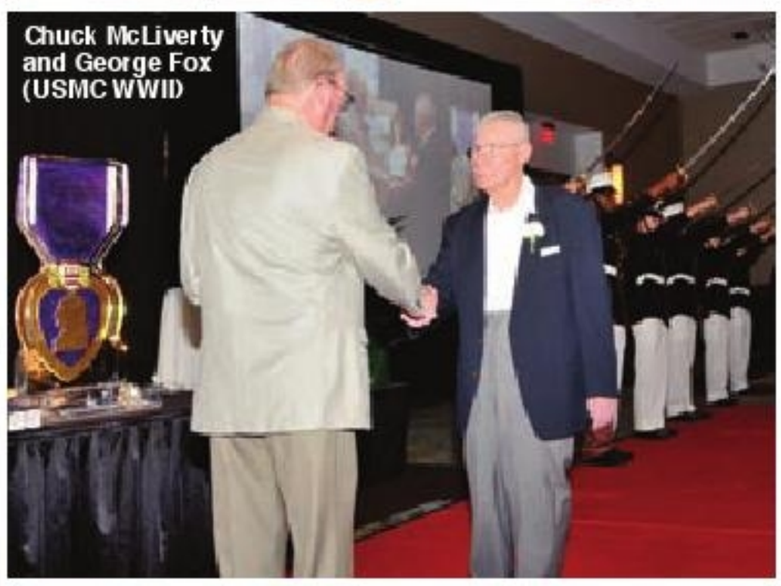
Sheriff Ed McMahon and Abduhl Rahman Shareef (USMC Vietnam)


Chuck McLiverty and Arthur Kenan (USA WWII)

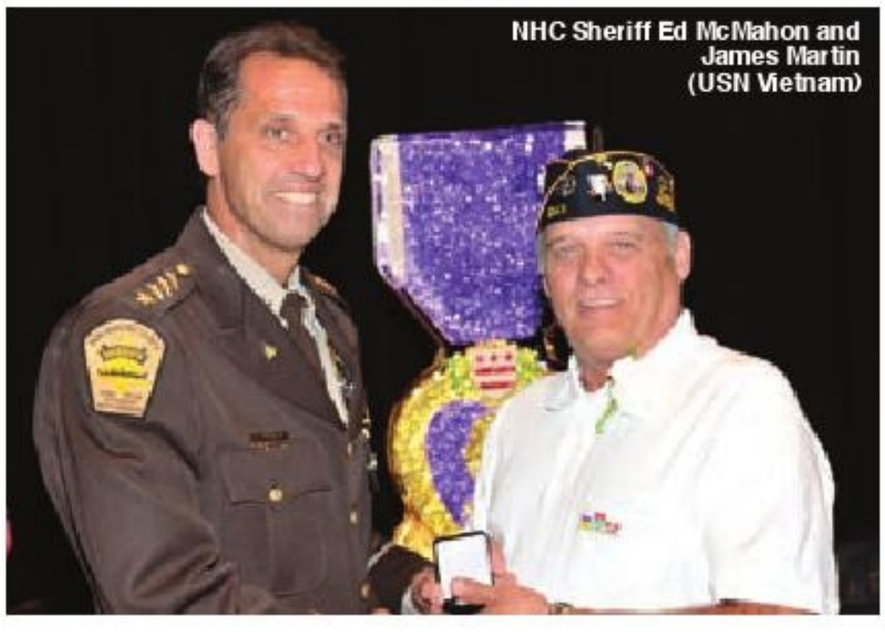

Haskell Jackson (USMC Vietnam)

Ron Butler (USA Vietnam)

Sheriff Ed McMahon and Darrell Monroe (USMC Vietnam)


Chuck McLiverty and George Fox (USMC WWII)

Steven Baker (USA - OEF)


NHC Sheriff Ed McMahon and James Martin (USN Vietnam)

Virginia Rivenbark (Gold Star Mother)

Paul M. Williams (USMC Vietnam)

Salt
MAGAZINE

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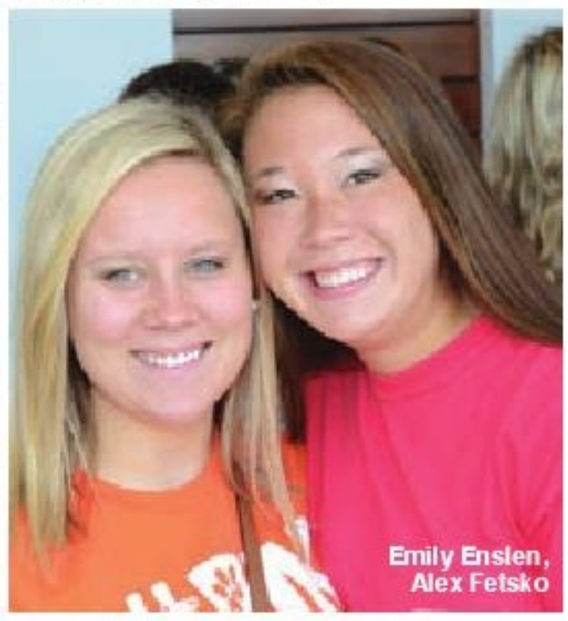
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Get You a Cherry Slurpee
and Enjoy the Equinox, Star Children!

By Astrid Stellanova

September may be the ninth month, but it means seven. In the cosmos, seven is a very lucky number. My sweetheart Beau and I shop exclusively at the 7-Eleven throughout the whole month of September. Grab a Slurpee and watch summer sliding on out, faster than you get to the bottom of the cup. There's also more to celebrate when it comes to astral parties. The autumn equinox falls on the 23rd. My new car tag says "Ad Astra," dear readers, which means, "to the stars."

Virgo (August 23—September 22)
You give off a lot of radiance this month; you feel good, look good, and don't you know it, Birthday Baby? There's nothing like gifts and cake to set a good mood, and there's a lot to look forward to long after the wrappings are in the recycling bin. During the 13th, there is a partial solar eclipse that you will find sparks more than a little energy and special oomph factor for Virgo. By the 27th, a total lunar eclipse will give you a sense of peace you haven't had in a long while. Then, to top it all off, there's more happening in the stars that gives you plenty to think about. Adapt, adjust and just try not to bust, Star Child.

Libra (September 23—October 22)
This is worth knowing: Mercury is in retrograde between September 17 and October 9 in your sign, Libras. So make the most of the time beforehand, because the retrograde leaves you a little bit out of sorts. OK, Honey, a lot out of sorts. Some say "don't sign, don't buy" during retrogrades. I just say, swim against the tide and enjoy the exercise. Helps firm up them flabby upper arms.

Scorpio (October 23—November 21)
Pay attention late in this month when there are some absolutely fabulous things happening in the night sky. On September 27, there is a total lunar eclipse. Look up; you may find something unusual also happens in how you feel about your time on planet Earth. You will find yourself in an entirely unusual and exciting position — even when upright, Baby Cakes.

Sagittarius (November 22—December 21)
It's true, and just about exhausting for you. Someone close to you has been doing a Benjamin Button and acting stupider and stupider. You can't make them wise up any more than you can bend spoons with your big toe. Shift your attention to becoming a bigger person, and graduating to the next astral plane like the star that you are.

Capricorn (December 22—January 19)
Your temper is getting hotter than a solar flare. If somebody crosses you, you are out of control, Honey. Get it in check. Life is not about getting in the last word. Would you rather hold onto righteous indignation, or would you rather be the favorite neighbor everybody wants to share watermelon and homemade ice cream with? Practice smiling; it won't hurt a bit.

Aquarius (January 20—February 18)
Just because somebody you know very, very well can cuss the paint off your toenails don't mean they are right. The worst thing about someone closest to you is how they manage to intimidate you with just a cross look and a smart alecky comeback. Caving in to them may seem easier, but that isn't how you become your best self. They are smugly superior and haven't earned the right to be the boss of you.

Pisces (February 19—March 20)
The lunar eclipse on September 27 will close out a chapter in your life that you have been reading and stewing over for a long, long time. Say goodbye to some baggage you've been carrying around like your life depended upon it. Now it's someone else's problem — never should have been yours to carry anyhow. With a lighter load, your heart is going to lift, and next month you finally get something long owed or promised.

Aries (March 21—April 19)
In the train station of life you always want to sit in the first-class section with your head high, even if you were riding to prison. That's part of what makes me smile about Aries; you know how to live it up, as if each day is your last, whether you are at the ice cream store or sitting on death row. You are a cheeky monkey who makes life in general a lot more fun; that's an adorable trait, Star Child. Go first class; you are the first sign in the cosmos, and never destined to ride in cargo.

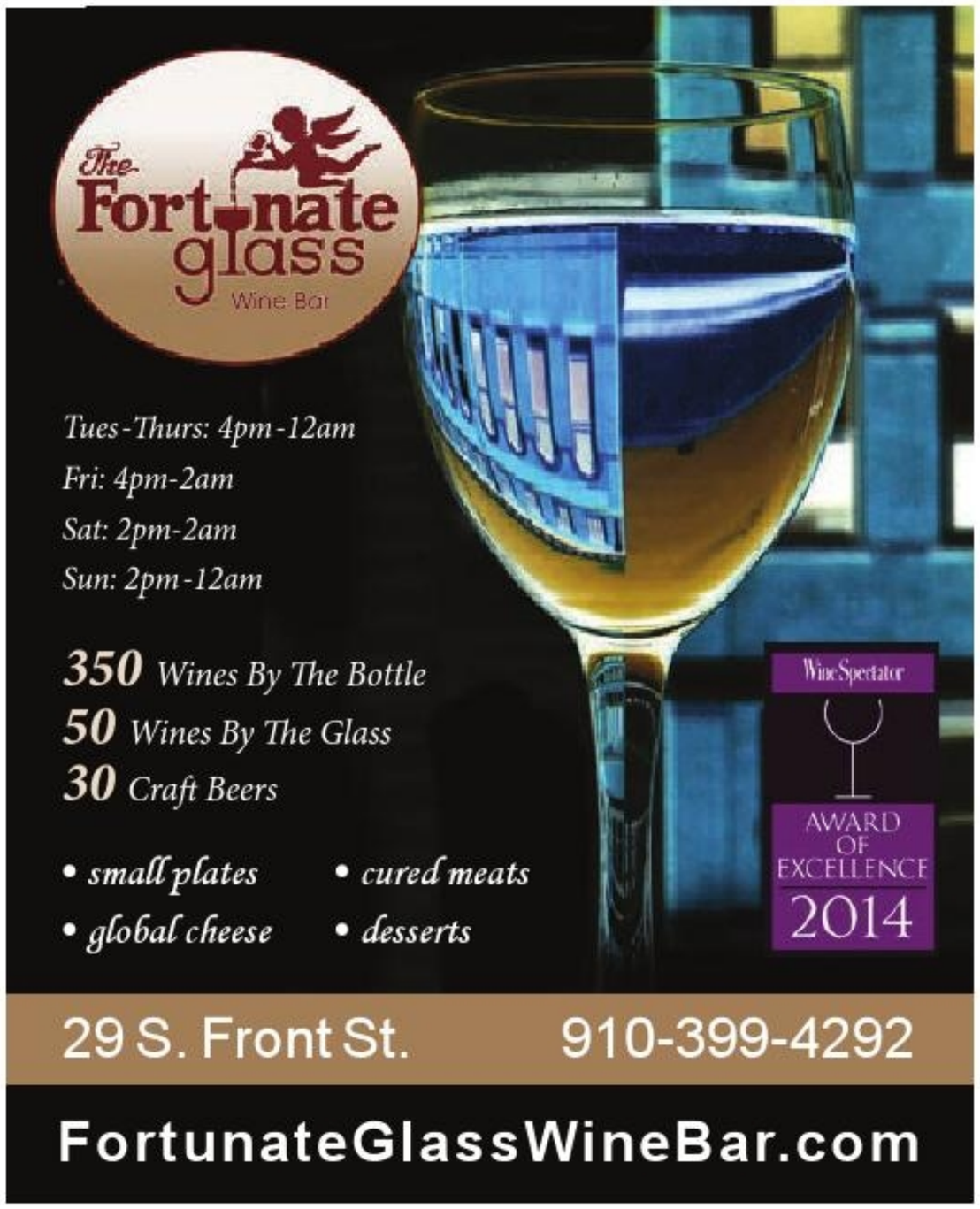
Taurus (April 20—May 20)
There is a pattern of innovation in your life right now that is pretty unusual. Ride that wave. You may feel frustrated that your last creative effort was not as well-received as hoped, but be patient as the tide is turning. You get noticed and rewarded for having special insights that leave some jealous and others downright slack-jawed. And just as a beauty pointer: Update your wardrobe while you are riding high. You are overdue to be a teensey bit selfish, Sugar.

Gemini (May 21—June 20)
Honey, some collect tolls and others seemed destined to pay them. You have your hand out saying "gimme" but sooner or later the Universe will remind you it's better to extend a hand to someone else. This is a time where giving is going to pay you much bigger psychic rewards; check your impulse to muscle to the front of the line. Give a little.

Cancer (June 21—July 22)
It appears to me that you are on the cusp of making a personal breakthrough you couldn't have guessed would ever, ever happen. The step you take may look small to others, but it is a big step ahead for you. Treasure your good fortune; be thankful. It is going to open something up within you that could transform everything ahead. This is a surprising period for small miracles in your life that will pay big in your sense of happiness.

Leo (July 23—August 22)
Leos keep their trials and tribulations to themselves, and only like to talk about the triumphs. That's fine, but your friends want to know you on a deeper level. This means it is time to share your story — without leaving out the not-so-good bits. There is someone you believe who wronged you that you actually wronged. Examine yourself, Sweet Thing. Resist the urge to make your life a living fiction, no matter how great a storyteller you are.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.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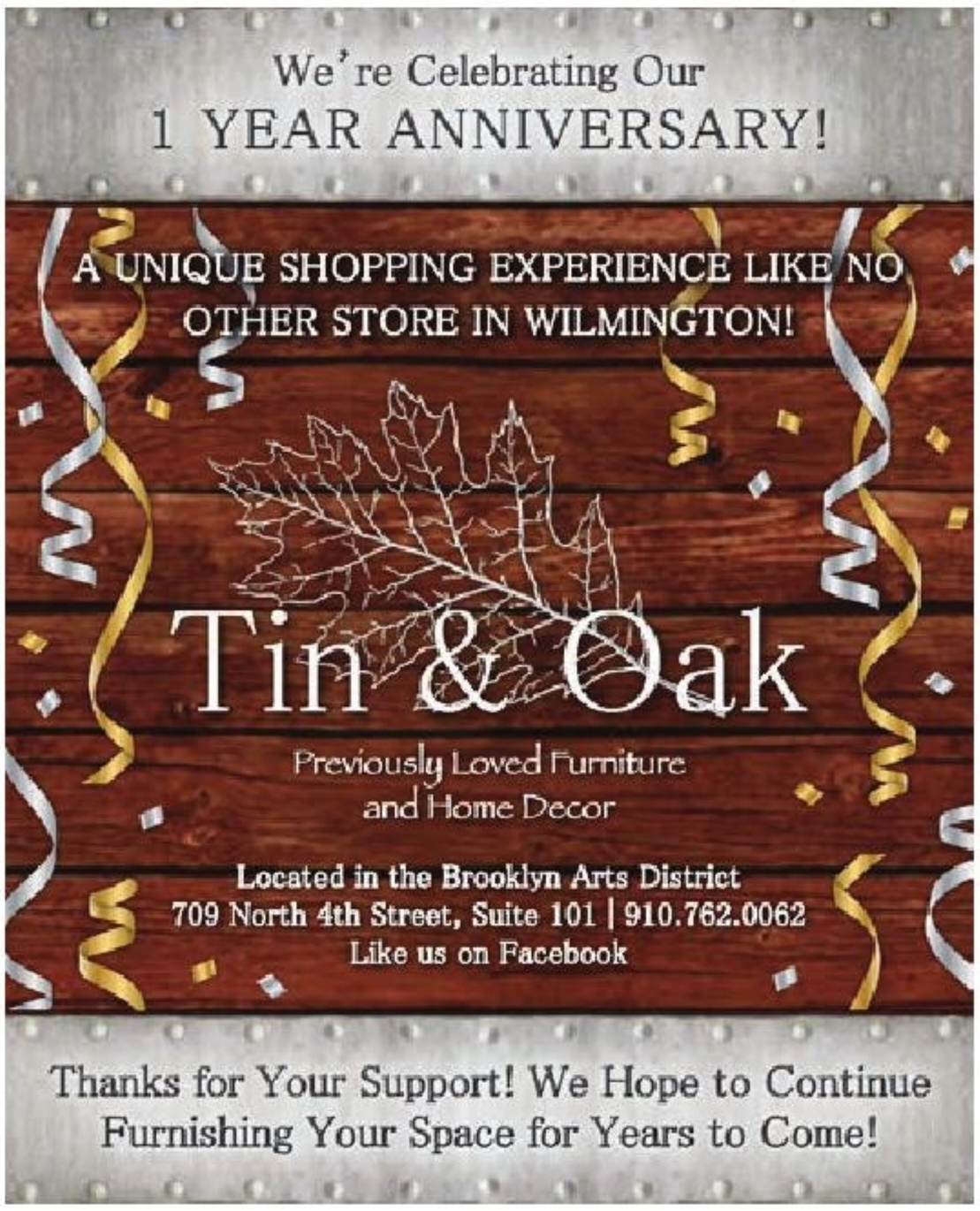
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A Father's Hope

And dreams of a life-changing app

By Clyde Edgerton

It's about 10 a.m. and I've been working on the first draft of an essay for the September 2015 issue of *Salt* magazine. I'm taking a break. I'm leaning against the headboard of my bed, and my 12-year-old son is stretched across the foot of the bed reading a book I've suggested.

The idea for the planned essay started a few days ago when I was driving along thinking about war, about the Christmas event in World War II when Allied and German soldiers joined briefly on the battlefield to celebrate and talk together — before going back to war. I wondered what they talked about. Because I have children, I started imagining men from the opposing armies talking about their children. I wondered if they'd then worry about later shooting the man who was the father of children he'd heard about. I suddenly imagined a present day app that connects the cellphone of a father in an army about to go to war with the cellphone of a father in an opposing army. The theory is of course that the soldier-fathers, having been enticed into conversations with each other about their children, will be less likely to do battle because in doing so they may kill fathers with whom they've just had a conversation, a conversation about their children's names, their likes, dislikes — about the fathers' hopes for their children.

Could something like a fathers-at-war app maybe work? How might I put this idea out into the world? As I wrote, the essay floundered.

I look at my son, reading the Fred Chappell novel *I Am One of You Forever* (1985). He said he'd try at least as far as the end of the first chapter. I suddenly have three big thoughts in quick succession:

1) The fathers-at-war-app essay is going badly.

2) How lucky I am to suggest one of my favorite books to my son — and he gives it a try!

3) *I Am One of You Forever* is thematically related to the central idea in my failed essay in ways I couldn't have imagined before this moment: The novel is about fathers, sons, uncles, family bonds and deep loss brought by all wars.

When I read the novel decades ago, it reminded me of my childhood and my early relationship to my elders, my father and my favorite uncle especially. (I just now asked my son if he'd read past the first chapter and he said yes.) The story, when I read it, brought to me the best aspects of my upbringing in a rural, Southern culture, and it brought home the unspeakable sadness invoked by the loss of young loved ones in battle. I hesitate to reveal more of the story because I don't want to spoil it in case you decide to read it.

(My son just stopped reading and left the book on the bed. It's now about 10:30 a.m.)

The book can't mean to him what it has meant and means to me, but he did hesitate during his reading about five minutes ago and ask me, "What is buttermilk?" Answering his question gave me an opportunity to talk about my father, my father's upbringing, pot liquor, pre-electricity methods of cooling food in a spring or open well, and other aspects about the culture of my childhood and the childhoods of my parents (Southern, rural), a culture that gets at least its fair share of a generalized, bad press.

My father-at-war app idea rests on the notion that the concept of family and children may be paramount in the lives of most men. A reason for problems with the essay is that while writing, I became less sure of the truth of that notion. Many men pit religion, nationalism, greed, blood thirst and desire for action above all, especially concerns about someone else's children. Right? Would a father-at-war app be a joke? A means to locate the enemy?

I leave the father-app essay behind. A plug for *I Am One of You Forever* is a more appropriate subject for an essay — now, at least.

After lunch and thinking through a new essay (this one), I'm worried that my son is giving up on the novel, but at 2 p.m. he's back to reading it again. . . Ah, there is hope that he might finish. If he reads to the end, he and I can talk about the war in that book — WWII, the war of a couple of my uncles. And maybe we will talk about my war, Vietnam, back when I was very young and a bachelor, how it seemed right to go to it then . . . but not now.

Maybe he and I can dream of an app that could help humanize soldiers, or more appropriately . . . political string-pullers around the world.

Clyde Edgerton is the author of ten novels, a memoir and a new work, Papadaddy's Book for New Fathers. *He is the Thomas S. Kenan III Distinguished Professor of Creative Writing at UNCW.*

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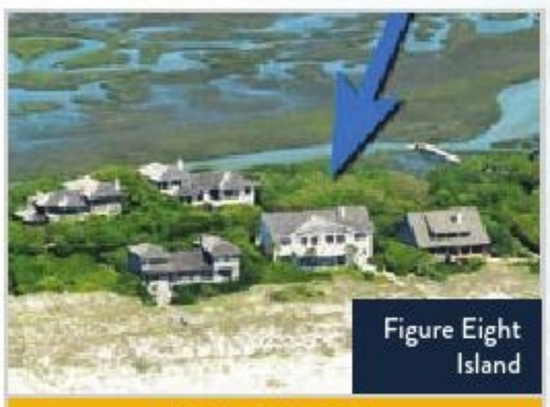

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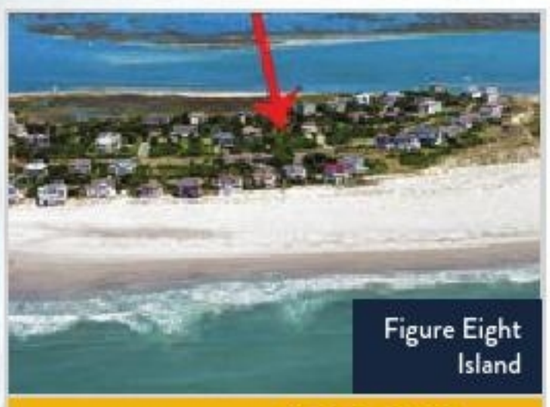

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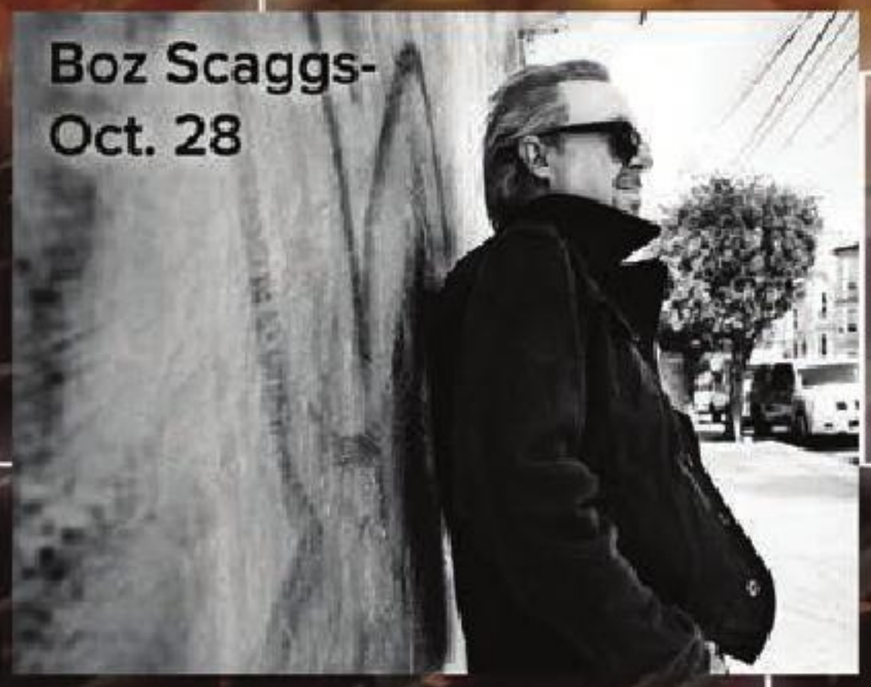

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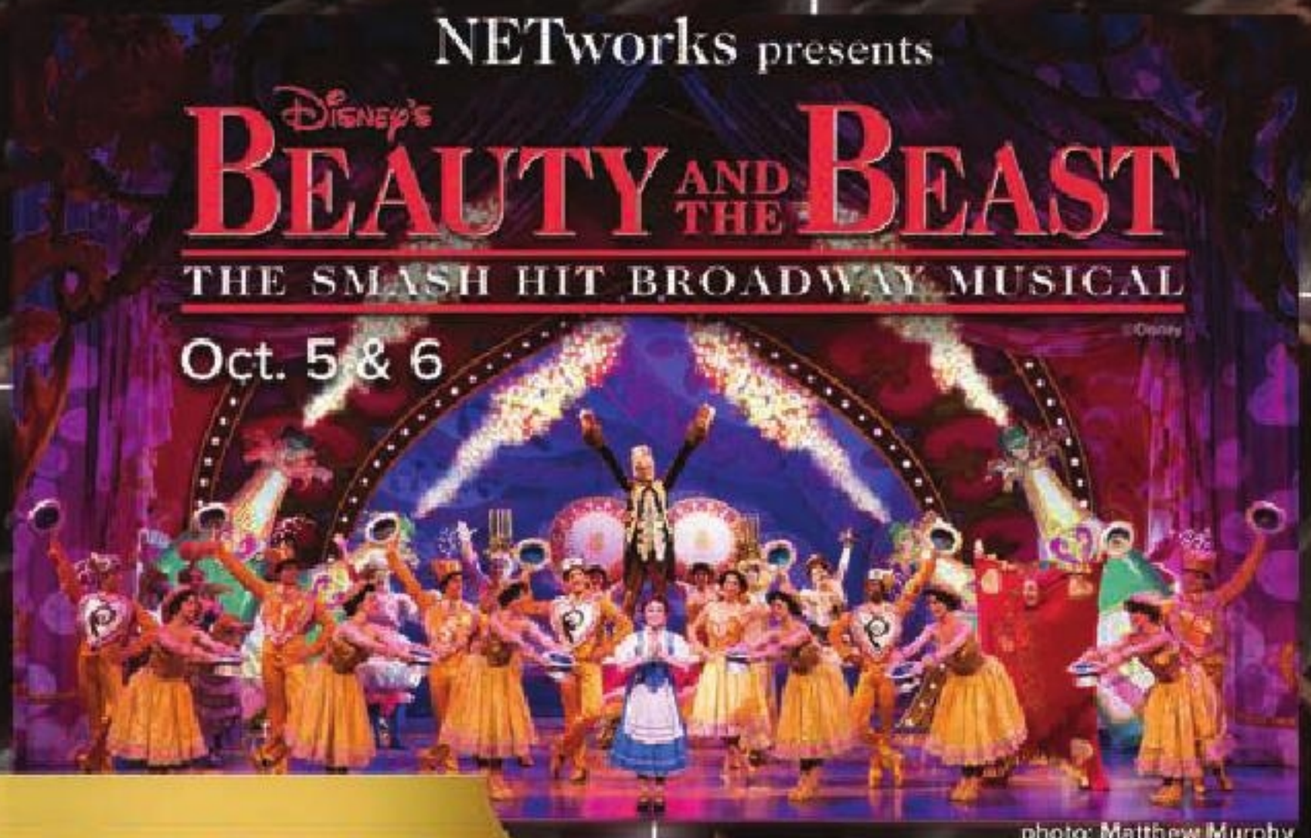

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